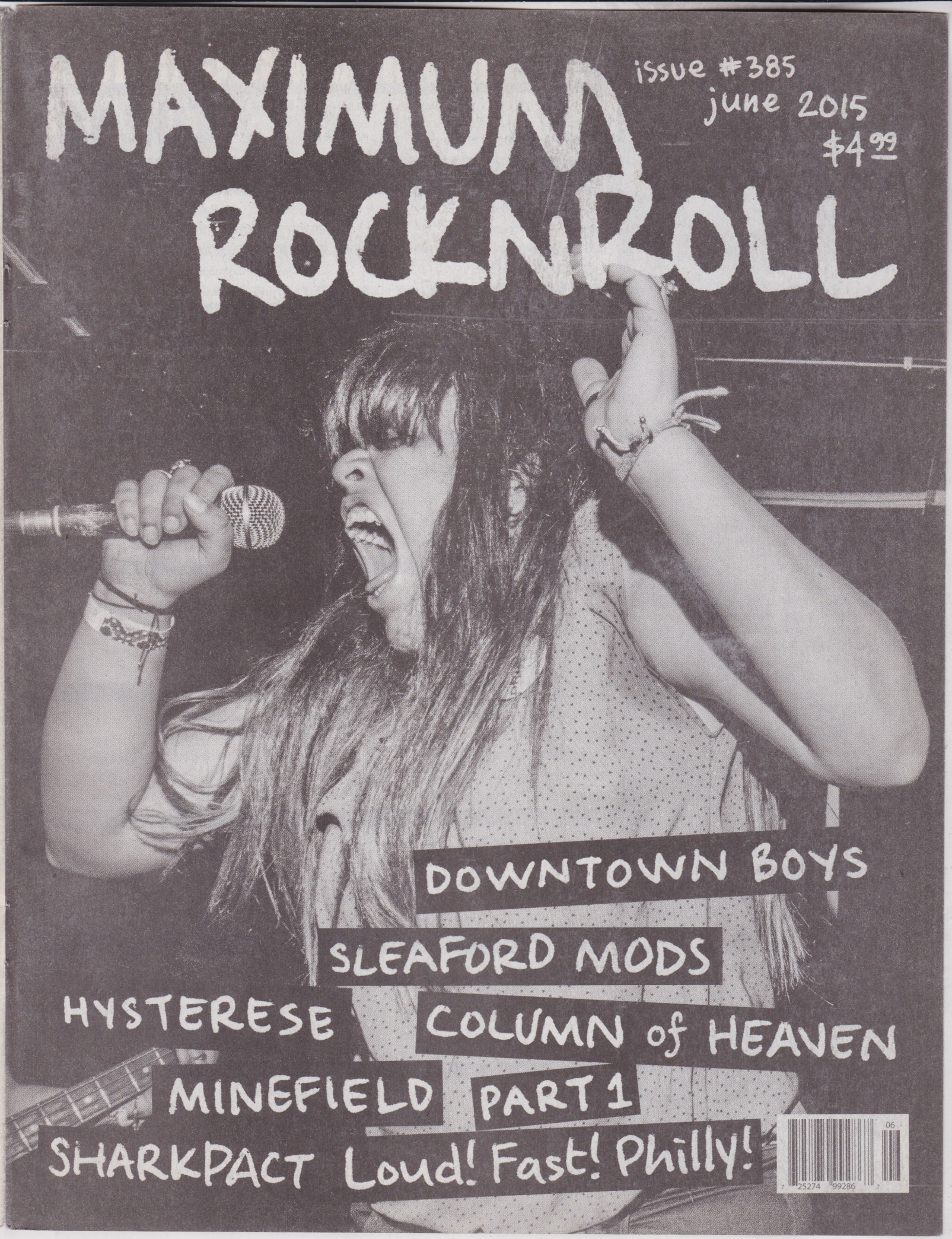
MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

issue #385
june 2015
$4.99



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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL
PO BOX 460760
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94146-0760
Phone (415) 923-9814
maximumrocknroll.com
mrr@maximumrocknroll.com

For what it's worth, here're some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TOP 10

GRACE AMBROSE

- LIME CRUSH – Graveyard EP
- TRASH KIT – Confidence LP
- SOBERANÍA PERSONAL – Benditos Sean Muñecos... LP
- PLASTIX – Ich Bin Modern! LP
- SACRED PAWS – Six Songs 12" / TOŽIBABE – Dežuje EP
- DETERGENTS – No Salvation EP
- SILVER SHADOWS – 12"
- FA BONX – "49 Stick/Tramps Jamble"
- OUTCASTS – Frustration LP
- TEENGENERATE – Live At Shelter LP

LYDIA ATHANASOPOULOU

- STREETS / X-PULSION – split EP
- SOBERANÍA PERSONAL – Benditos Sean Muñecos... LP
- TOŽIBABE – Dežuje EP
- NEU-RONZ – You're Calling Me EP
- MAD VIRGINS – "I Am a Computer/F… And Suck"
- PLASTIX – Ich Bin Modern! LP
- VLASTA POPIĆ – Kvadrat CD
- XAXAXA – Sami Mazi I Zeni CD
- BOOM BOOM KID – Armagedon flexi
- IMAGINARY DICTIONARY – James Brown Is Not Dead EP

MATT BADENHOP

- VASTUSTA – demo
- STEEL CHAINS – demo
- PARASYTES – demo
- ABSOLUT Hells Highest Power Promo
- SOBERANÍA PERSONAL – Benditos Sean Muñecos... LP
- PLASTIX – Ich Bin Modern! LP
- SUICIDAS / TRANCE – split EP
- NO///SE – Lower Berth LP
- TOŽIBABE – Dežuje EP
- DATA CONTROL / SNAKE – split CS

WILL BLOMQUIST

- SIX BREW BANTHA – Intravenously Commodified LP
- IN DISGUST / SFN – split EP
- SOBERANÍA PERSONAL – Benditos Sean Muñecos... LP
- SUICIDAS / TRANCE – split EP
- SILVER SHADOWS – 12"
- SACRED PAWS – Six Songs 12"
- THE INSTIGATORS – LP / THE OUTCASTS – LP
- LIME CRUSH – "Graveyard" EP
- VIOLENT PARTY/BLAZING EYE – live
- BROKEN WATER/DEFACE MAN – live

MITCH CARDWELL

- TEENGENERATE – Live At Shelter LP
- LAST SONS OF KRYPTON – Teenage Trash LP
- BLIND SHAKE – Fly Right LP
- TRASH KIT – Confidence LP
- MAD VIRGINS – "I Am a Computer/F… And Suck"
- CHAINSAW – See-Saw EP
- PLASTIX – Ich Bin Modern! LP
- USELESS EATERS – Singles: 2011-2014 LP
- CUNTZ – "Cooked/Cheen"
- MISSING MONUMENTS – Too Many People... EP

ROBERT COLLINS

Conquest for Mongolia...

LAYLA GIBBON

- SHEER MAG – live
- LIME CRUSH – "Graveyard" EP
- SACRED PAWS – Six Songs 12"
- TRASH KIT – Confidence LP
- SILVER SHADOWS – 12"
- TOŽIBABE – Dežuje EP
- SOBERANÍA PERSONAL – Benditos Sean Muñecos... LP
- UNIFORM CHOICE – 1982 Orange Peel Sessions EP
- PLASTIX – Ich Bin Modern! LP
- OUTCASTS – Frustration LP

DAN GOETZ

- KROMOSOM – live
- SICK FIX – live
- CAREER SUICIDE – live
- FREAK VIBE – live
- PERSPEX FLESH – live
- MYSTIC INANE- – live
- SUICIDAS – live
- VAASKA – live
- NANDAS – live
- SEM HASTRO – live

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

GREG HARVESTER

- NATURE BOYS – "Pissy Wind/Coast to Coast"
- V/A – Destroy Poserton LP
- BAZZ – Destroy Destroy CS
- TENEMENT – Bruised Music Volume One LP
- SUICIDAS / TRANCE – split EP
- MISSING MONUMENTS – Too Many People... EP
- LINE TRAPS – LP
- SILVER SHADOWS – 12"
- TOŽIBABE – Dežuje EP
- ANIMAL LOVER – live

KENNY KAOS

- PLASTIC PINKS – "Fun/Kelly"
- FASHIONISM – "Smash the State" EP
- THE DECLINE – "Radio Revolution/Loser Machine"
- THE VICTIM PARTY – "Had Drugs/Soft Drinks"
- STOP WORRYING & LOVE THE BOMB – Noun LP
- DETERGENTS – No Salvation EP
- CHRISTI – "Cry/Get You Off My Mind"
- ACTIVATIONS – Radio On/Attack EP
- CUNTZ – "Cooked/Cheen"
- TEENGENERATE – Live At Shelter LP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- PLASTIX – Ich Bin Modern! LP
- CUNTZ – "Cooked/Cheen" / SEX SNOBS – Lonely LP
- FA BONX – "49 Stick/Tramps Jamble"
- SOFT SHOULDER – all EPs / THE ZOLTARS – LP
- TOŽIBABE – Dežuje EP
- OUTCASTS – Frustration (Best of 1977-1985) LP
- TEENGENERATE – Live At Shelter LP
- CHAINSAW/MAD VIRGINS/X-PULSION/STREETS 45s
- V/A – Four On Fur EP / DETERGENTS – No Salvation EP
- NED RIFLE/WHAT WE DO IN THE SHADOWS – films

RAY LUJAN

- CYANIDE PILLS – Government EP
- IRISH HANDCUFFS – Hits Close To Home CD
- THE JONES – Gravity Blues CD
- MAD PARADE – The Fool EP
- MISSING MONUMENTS – Too Many People... EP
- SUCCESS – Radio Recovery CD
- THIRTY SIX STRATEGIES – Strategy Three CD
- VICTIM PARTY – Getting To Know... LP
- MAKTHAVERSKAN – live / STRUNG OUT – live
- MR. T EXPERIENCE – live

FRED SCHRUNK

- TOŽIBABE – Dežuje EP
- LIME CRUSH – "Graveyard" EP
- NATURE BOYS – "Pissy Wind/Coast to Coast"
- PLASTIX – Ich Bin Modern! LP
- SILVER SHADOWS – 12"
- SOBERANÍA PERSONAL – Benditos Sean Muñecos... LP
- TENEMENT – Bruised Music Volume One LP
- ENDLESS COLUMN – Summer EP
- FUN PEOPLE – Desarme EP
- SACRED PAWS – Six Songs 12"

LENA TAHMASSIAN

- SOBERANÍA PERSONAL – Benditos Sean Muñecos... LP
- DETERGENTS – No Salvation EP and live
- VLASTA POPIĆ – Kvadrat CD
- BIOFEEDBACK – Karamihan Nao Ay Pu EP
- SILVER SHADOWS – 12"
- TOŽIBABE – Dežuje EP
- SUICIDAS / TRANCE – split EP
- OUTCASTS – Frustration LP
- YOUTH AVOIDERS – live
- SHEER MAG – live

ELI WALD

- LIME CRUSH – "Graveyard" EP
- SHEER MAG – live x 3
- TRASH KIT – Confidence LP
- SILVER SHADOWS – 12"
- V/A – Hardcore, Gimme Some More EP
- SACRED PAWS – Six Songs 12"
- DETERGENTS – No Salvation EP
- CUNTZ – "Cooked/Cheen"
- SOFT SHOULDER – Stair EP
- GAY KISS – Preservation Measures LP

ZINE TOP TEN

- Artcore #33
- Asswipe #7
- Basura #2
- Mend My Dress #13
- Portland Underground #1
- Punk
- Spare Change #30
- Teenset #30
- Total Blast No. 5
- Words Upon Words #1 & #2

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CONTRIBUTORS

Bryony Beynon
Felix Havoc
George Impulse
Marissa Magic
Al Quint
Alex Simon
George Tabb
Andrew Underwood
Tino Dittus
Thane Fay
Sabine Haydl
Vilja Joensuu
Yoni Kroll
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#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/Aug '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photo spread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/Sept '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/Oct '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/Nov '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#307/Dec '08. Lük Haas, Sotatilla, Billy Bao, Homostupids, The Yolks, United Mutation, Diodes.

#308/Jan '09. Punks & Film Special with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, and more.

#309/Feb '09. Ooga Boogas, Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr. California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/Mar '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens. Health Issue Special–Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Pioggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

#313/June '09. Cult Ritual, Acid Reflux, NN, Herds, Hunx and His Punx, Grass Widow, Project Hopeless, Defect Defect, Tom's Midnight Garden, Existers and scene reports from Sydney and Boston.

#315/Aug '09. Zero Boys, Skin Like Iron, Punch, The Black and Whites, Insomnio, Resist, Blank Dogs, Etacarinae, Come On, London and Brest scene reports.

#316/Sept '09. Amebix, Born/Dead, Divisions, Meatlocker, Something Fierce, Mutating Meltdown, Altercado, Anal Warnead, Nick Toczec, Cowley Club, Albany scene report.

#318/Nov '09. Destino Final, Ratas Del Vaticano, Hex Dispensers, John Joseph/Cro-Mags, Explode Into Colors, Ratos De Porao, Stupids. Antidotum/Czosnek Tour Diary, Disco Assault. Fuera De Linea

#319/Dec '09. The Fix, Slices, Nodzzz, Brilliant Colors, Positive Noise, Gun Outfit, Pink Reason, Scrotum Poles, Gandhi's Cookbook, Goner Fest Photospread, Punk On Kuollut, Eläköön Hardcore: A Personal History of Finnish Hardcore.

#320/Jan '10. Decade-end top tens, D-Clone, Broken Water, Control, Ian Glasper of "The Day the Country Died" and "Trapped in a Scene."

#322/Mar '10. MRR Review Staff's 2009 Top Tens, Japanese artist Sugi, Death, Dry-Roy, Druid Perfume, Kim Phuc, Defensa Absoluta.

#323/Apr '10. The Spits, Face the Rail, Battletorn, Scatha, Dadfag, Attentat Sonore, Partibrejkers, Mob Rules, Last Pogo, John Paull Williams from Really Red, Chuck Warner.

#324/May '10. Bruce Roehrs memorial, , Kleenex/Liliput, Necro Hippies, Isterismo, RVIVR, Iceage, Tubers, Rot Shit, Beefeater, Cairo IL.

#325/June '10. X (Australia), Daylight Robbery, Ty Segall, Morne, Nü Sensae, Pollution, Th' Inbred, Bad Sports, Wankys, Rakosi, Lotus Fucker

#326/July '10. U-ron from Really Red, Slang, Bunny Skulls, Trash Kit, Sedition, High Castle, Marcel Duchamp, Street Eaters, Circle Pit, Mehkago NT, Random Conflict, New Orleans and Calgary scene reports.

#327/Aug '10. Os Estudantes, The Curse, Pekinska Patka, Venereans, Thou, Italian scene report, Ratcharge zine, and Culo.

#328/Oct '10. Deathrats, The Conversions, Agnostic Front, Puffy Areolas, Super Wild Horses, Rape Revenge, Bernays Propaganda, New York and Czech Republic scene reports.

#329/Fall '10. Cock Sparrer, Irritones, UV Race, Veins, Kakka-Hätä 77, Kontatto, Moonhearts, Beyond Pink, Saint Vitus, France scene report.

#330/Nov '10. Forgetters, Acephalix, Foreign Objects, Hank IV, Pheromoans, La La Vasquez, Credentials, Bukkake Boys, Negative Lifestyle, Tyranna, Katriina Etholen, Ireland scene report.

#331/Dec '10. Kylmä Sota, Vic Bondi, Total Abuse, La Merma, Doña Maldad, Frankie Rose and the Outs, Little League, Versificator, Frankfurt and Belgium scene reports.

#333/Feb '11. The Welders, Touch & Go fanzine, Rai Ko Ris, Dolly Mixture, Hitman, Straight Arrows, Eskapo Phillippines Tour Diary, Venezuela scene report, Olympia scene report.

#334/Mar '11. 2010 Year End Top Tens, A State of Mind, Useless Children, Straight Arrows, Sober Living for the Revolution, DC scene report.

#336/May '11. Kriegshög, Steve Ignorant, Teargas, Tantrum, Hygeine, Shoppers, Chris Walter, Adrenalin OD, Spastic Panthers, Hungarian scene report.

#337/June '11. Destroy All Movies, John Morton/Electric Eels, White Fence, Ydinperhe, Nux Vomica, Vanya Bonecrusher, Black Feet, Uzi Rash, This Is LA not L.A.: '80s Hardcore Flyers in New Orleans, Buffalo NY scene report.

#338/July '11. Zouo, Inservibles, Krömosom, Useless Eaters, Nightgaun, No Problem, Raw Nerves, Family Man Lost Tribe.

#339/Aug '11. Head Cleaners, Midnite Snaxxx, Cocskar, Small Bones, Xcentric Noise records, Grown Ups, Youth Avoiders, Tomek Lipinski/Brygada Kryzys, Afternoon Gentlemen, Czech Punk History part 2.

#340/Sept '11. Demokhratia, GG King, Ivan Brun, B-Lines, State Poison, Jeremy Hush, Love Triangle, Deaf Club Oral History, Czech Punk History part 3.

#341/Oct '11. Brian Walsby, Plates, Decraneo, Diet Cokeheads, Royal Headache, Ed Nasty & the Dopeds, Black Mamba Beat Tour of South Africa, Unfit Scum, Mongrel zine.

#342/Nov '11. Kyushu Noisecore Summit, Brown Sugar, Vapid, No Rest, Brain Killer, Roach Motel, Brain F, IFB, Nekromantiker, Aires & Graces.

#343/Dec '11. Porkeria, Descarados, Peace or Annihilation, E.A.T.E.R., Poly Styrene, Severence Package, Katorga Works, Unwanted Christmas Presents, Resist Her Transistor.

#344/Jan '12. OBN IIIS, Social Chaos, Neo Cons, Alice Bag, Vaginors, Blookrow Butcher, Wartorn, Shitty Limits Last Show Report, Wretched, Zero Progress Tour Diary part 1, Means to an End Fest, Slick 46, Toughskins, No Gods No Matresses zine.

#345/Feb '12. 2011 Year End Top Tens, Big Eyes, Terrible Feelings, Zero Progress Tour Report part 2, the Unruled, Rapid Loss.

#346/Mar '12. Bärchen und die Milchbubies, Who Killed Spokey Jacket, Krömosom Tour of Japan, Globsters, Nigh Birds, Tribal War, Give Praise records, Refuse records.

#347/Apr '12. Ron Paul Special Issue, Carburetor Dung, Dark Times, Neon Piss, Kruel, Lapinpolthajat, Criminal Code, Slice Harvester zine, Iron hand, Indigesti, Damnable Excite Zombies, Hawaii scene report.

#348/May '12. Seein Red, Disorder, Negazione, Antimob, Acid Baby Jesus, Lebakko, Wax Idols, Da, Defy, Crimson Scarlet, Leprosy, Nasa Space Universe, Apache Dropout, Konton Crasher.

#349/June '12. Omegas, Zyanose, Antisect, Negative Standards, No Statik, Your Pest Band, Eutanasia, Appalachian Terror Unit, Power Age, Inly Fumes and Corpses, Skizophrenia, David Ensminger, Greek scene report.

#350/July '12. The Photo Issue: Justine Demetrick, Ricky Adam, Jeanne Hansen, Don Pyre, Chis Boarts Larsen, Maria de Piedade Morais.

#351/Aug '12. 30th Anniversary Issue: MRR's Worst & Best, the Tim Yo Covers & Greentaping, Napalm Raid, God Equals Genocide, Stressors, American Sun, Ferocious X, Stripmines, Skitsystem, Juan y Diëgo, Banran.

#352/Sept '12. Stagnation, Luta Armada, Vaarallinen, Frozen Teens, Brain Slug, Noisecore Roundtable #2, Kohosh, Kvoteringen, Gritos de Resistencia, Alabaster Choad, Dipers, Murder in the Front Row, Support NYC.

#353/Oct '12. Brain Tumors, Effluxus, Anti Cimex, the Cravats, Unlearn, Warsong, Sick/Tired, To Live A Lie records, Stories from the Peruvian Underground part 1, Bad Daddies, Imminent Destruction records with Lastly, Desperdicio, Against the Grain, Disturd.

#354/Nov '12. Replica, Ancient Filth, Synthetic ID, Maximo Volumen, O Inimigo, the Splits, Ohmwar, Beatrap, Victims Tour Diary part 2, Girth records.

#355/Dec '12. Avi Spivak, Red Dons, the Estranged, Agrimonia, Antimelodix, Napolnariz, La Armada, DHK, Breathing Light, the Victims European tour diary, Hamilton Ontario scene.

#357/Feb '13. Forward, Hounds of Hate, Contorture, Kicker, Nothing, Lunatic Fringe, Detonate records, Beatnik Termites, Detroit scene report.

#358/Mar '13. 2012 Year End Top Tens, Brontez Purnell, Potty Mouth, Nitad, Schizophazia, East Anglia scene report.

#359/Apr '13. Sickoids, Hassler. Divorce. Cancer Spreading. la Flingue. the Line. White Murder, the Paper Bags versus the Meat Sluts. Greenville, SC scene report.

#360/May '13. Stress, Proxy, the Kids, Kalte Lust, HIRS, Autonomy, Nuclëar Fröst, Dead Air Studio, Blood Orange Infoshop, Death Traitors, Elks Lodge Massacre Revisited.

#361/June '13. Organize and Arise, Fear of Extinction, The Rats Tour Diary, Kathleen Hanna, The Shorts, Hard Feelings, No Power, Melusaaste, We Got Power zine part 1.

#362/July '13. Jeff Paul, TRUST zine, Shaved Women, Hondartzako Hondakinak, Kurraka, Born Wrong, Homicide, United Arab Emirates & Toronto, Canada scene reports, We Got Power zine part 2.

#363/Aug '13. Las Otras, Toinen Vaihtoehto zine, Sudor, Terveet Kädet, Black & White, Stillsuit, Taquila Mockingbird, Arturo Vega, Ruined Families, Baitline!!! zine, R.O.T.T.E.R., No Mistake, Siren Songs, Yorba Linda, CA scene report.

#364/Sept '13. Last Chaos, Snob Value, NE! Records, RAD, Asile, Whatever Brains, The New Flesh, Trashies, Forgotten Generation, Nightfall/Population Zero, Texas Filth scene report.

#365/Ocotber '13. Condition Tour Diary, Zudas Krust, Doomed Society Radio, Kontrasekt, Bib Black Cloud, Hero Dishonest, Violent Party, Helvetin Viemärit, Malcolm, Clearview Records, Brno, CZ scene report.

#366/Nov '13. Chaos Destroy, Permanent Ruin, Thisclose, Halsey Swain, Rosa Apatrida, No More Fiction, Räjäyttäjät, Nudes, Tarantuja, Destruye y Huye, Vertical House Records, Punk Photo Roadtrip.

#367/Dec '13. The Mob, Creem, Gag, generacion Suicida, Good Throb, Force Fed Drugs, Total Trash, Life Chain, Concrete Worms, War// Plague, Julia Ostertag, Bad American.

#368/Jan '14. Queer Issue with Anti-Corpos, Shopping, Glory Hole, Porcelain, Strong Boys, Ejaculoid, Closet Burner, Peeple Watchin', Samuel Shanahoy, Dures et Gays, Priests, Groke, Screaming Queens tour diary, Queer Zine Fest London, International queer scene report.

#369/Feb '14. Dezerter, Arctic Flowers, Stoic Violence, Strange Factory, Gobierno Militar, Poliskitzo, Vöight-Kampff, Rat/Xerox, Nü-kleer Blast Suntan.

#370/Mar '14. Year End Top Tens, Nervosas, Komplikations, Mallwalkers, New Orleans punk documentary Almost Ready.

#371/April '14. Bill Bondsman, Crapoulet Records, O! Kult, Rational Animals, Stab, Woolf, Varix, New York's Alright Fest, Miami scene report.

#372/May '14. EU's Arse, Siege, XAXAXA, Razorcake, Alert! Alert! Space Wolves, Rhythm of Cruelty, Straight Crimes, PMMA, Strange Attractor, Revenge of the Psychotronic Man, Scotland scene report.

#373/June '14. Anti You, Crusades, Rat Damage, Hank., Cottaging, Pesadilla, Distopika, Fed Up Fest, Damn Broads, Destry Hampton, Ben Snakepit & Mitch Clem, Los Culitos, The Lowest.

#374/July '14. No Babies, Grand Collapse, Gulag Beach, 1984, Quaaludes, Ausmuteants, Countdown to Armageddon, Wañuy, Fear of the Future, Bishops Green, Colombia scene report, Igor Vidmar, Endless Grinning Skulls.

#375/Aug '14. Una Bèstia Incontrolable, Eiefits, Extreme Noise Records, Vertigo, Glue, S.U.S, Svin: Leningrad Punk Progenitor, Thee Mighty Fevers, Cool Death Records, Miscalculations, Born Wrong Tour Diary.

#376/Sept '14. Dishrags, Gas Rag, SHIT, Iron Lung Records, Far-Out Fangtooth, Kuudes Silmä, Maailmanloppu, Paul Birnbaum of Septic Death, Extincion de los Insectos, Patras, Greece scene report, Traces in the Snow: '80s Siberian Punk.

#379/December '14. Rakta, Autistic Behavior, Nunhex, Marmara Streisand, Protestor, Misled Youth, Dick & Jane, Mothers News, Brooks Headley, Death By Audio, Doomed To Extinction Records, photo spread by Mateus Mondini.

#380/Feb '15. Orden Mundial, Frau, Raw Power, Nots, Don Giovanni Records, "Distorted" Sydney documentary, En Psychro, the Instigation, Red Scare Industries, Tzn Xenna, and photos from Static Shock Weekend and A Varning from Montreal.

#381/Feb '15. Hysterics, Earth Girls, Broken Prayer, Dark Times, Accidente, Quango, Vacant State, Metadona Label, Not Dead Yet fest, Wiccans, Börn Iceland scene report.

#382/Mar '15. 2014 Year-End Top Tens, Spot, In School, Pig DNA, Grenoble scene report.

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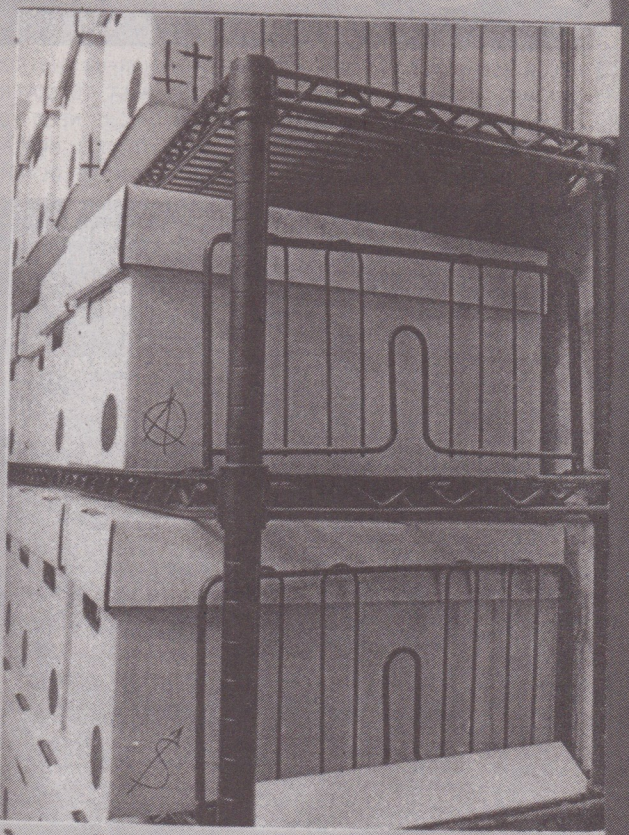

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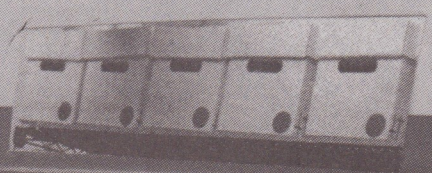


LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Di V.,

While it's a cute rhetorical tactic you used to string me up as the "boring male", "the problem," a "bro" to make the good points from your last article again, I was actually trying to engage with you on what seems like a big flaw in your logic (but hey, if you really took "... call the cops on the sausage party" as anything more than a joke than maybe you really are incapable of critical dialog).

I was responding to your demand for mandatory 50%+ inclusion based on gender, which I believe reveals a big contradiction in your argument. This is what I was referring to when I said "criteria for inclusion should be genuine, musical...not some guilty exercise in mandatory PC Punk points." For example, I think it is a screaming example of perpetuating negative female gender roles if a guy starting a band recruits female band members just to adhere to your new doctrine, rather than valuing their talents and respecting them as musical peers. In a similar way, it perpetuates the pigeonholing of a wide variety of female bands into girl group/Riot Grrrl camps if show bookers must think of bands in terms of gender to fit a bill. I hope you do not again misread this as an attack on doing whatever is necessary to support good female/queer/freak bands; I am all for righteous support of any good band even if it means breaking with current "punk"/ hardcore scenes.

Before I tee off for a final fuck you, maybe I'll tell you a bit about myself. I play in three bands with 33-50% female members and it is very, very rarely that I book or play a show that doesn't involve many women/queer people. I do not force myself to do these things and pat myself on the back for undoing patriarchy; I do them because the people I have musical chemistry with have all kinds of different looking genitalia and this is what gets us off artistically.

So hey, Kool Thing, if I'm the boring male then you are the frustrated social critic blinded by your reactionary quasi-fascist PC "punk" bubble to hear any kind of dissenting voice as anything but "the problem." Hope things are peachy in there.

—ML

Greetings!

In the February issue of this year Greg reviewed my band's demo (we're called Ruby Buff) and compared us to a band called Leg from the Midwest. I tried to find more about them because I wasn't familiar and didn't find anything. They have a hard name to find on the internet. Anyway I was wondering if Greg or someone had some links to their music or could send me some. Also thanks for the review! We'll send you future recordings!

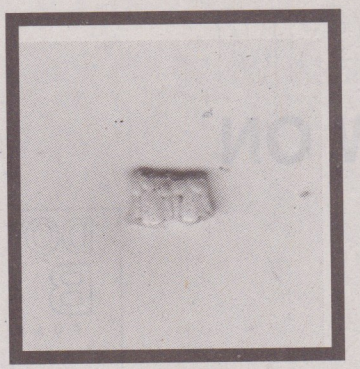
—Pat / Ruby Buff

Hey Pat,

Upon reflection, Leg is an obscure reference point to use in an internationally distributed magazine...especially for a band who only released one EP and never played outside of their home state of Indiana. Sorry about that, but if it makes a Leg fan out of you or any of our readers, then everyone wins.

Leg does not have a Bandcamp page or any real online presence, but if you use your chosen search engine to look up "Leg Remote Outposts," you'll find information and a download of their sole EP. Thanks for writing. Your band rules and I'm looking forward to future releases.

—Greg Harvester



Are you the person who sent us an envelope postmarked Dallas, TX with no return address that only contained this piece of bone, wrapped in a partially filled out multiple choice medical survey? Yeah, please, please don't do that again.

CORRECTIONS:

Garett Fisbeck, not Garrett Fisbeck, took all of the amazing photos from our Everything Is Not OK photospread in last month's issue. Looked like a killer time and temporarily made me wanna move to Oklahoma City. See more of his photos at garettfisbeck.com.

Mercury was in retrograde, or something, and Emma Maatman's contribution to the art and comics issue was mangled in transmission to us. Check it out in its full glory further on in the pages of this magazine. Keep up with her work at emmamaatman.com.

We probably made more mistakes, and if you're anything like me, you'll revel in catching them. Volunteer to be a proofreader / fact checker and save us from ourselves: mrr@maximumrocknroll.com.

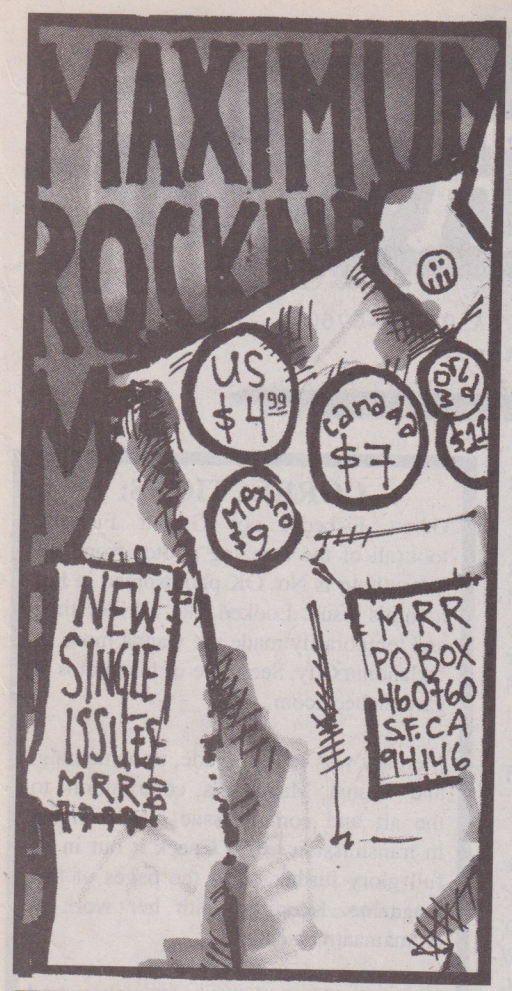
GENERAL BULLSHIT:

We're still looking for a coordinator! Lydia has moved on to sunnier shores (literally—Oakland has 10° on the city some days!) and I'm here all by my lonesome. Move into our punk palace and lose your mind (in a good way!) to a constant soundtrack of the newest and sickest international punk and hardcore jammers...Get in touch for an application.

May 16th will be a day of shows around the world, all benefiting the magazine. There's probably one near you. Check our facebook for updates.

The Los Crudos *Doble LP Discografia* should be back from the plant any day now. We fell victim to the delays that are plaguing all punks trying to make records in the United States any time near Record Store Day. Order your copy soon or regret it forever...One time pressing of 2,000 and when they're gone, they are GONE.

— Grace



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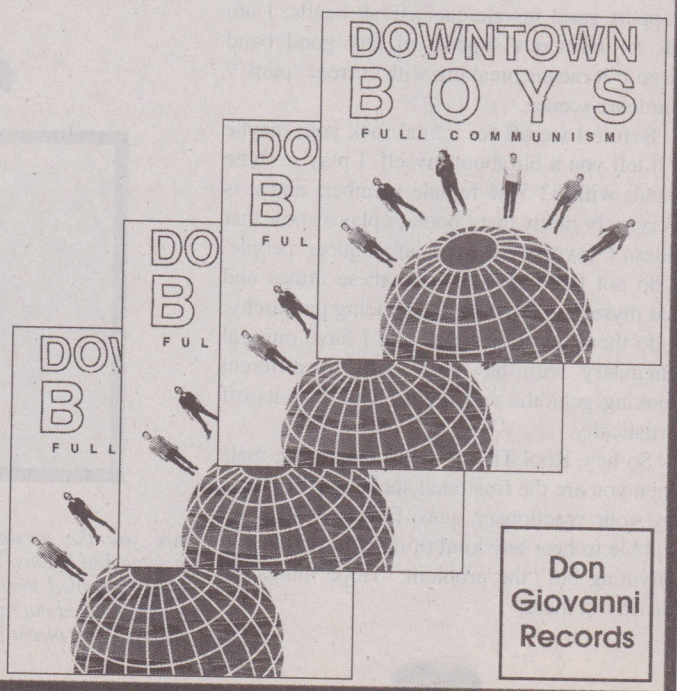


COLUMNS

I went on tour with SEX DWARF last year when they were touring the US. This column is part one of three of my experiences traveling with them for a week.

On November 4th 2014, Swedish noise punks SEX DWARF flew into New York to begin their North American tour, a "cabaret" of "non stop erotic noise" (as quoted off their tour poster). This would be their first show of two relentless weeks zigzagging around the East Coast and Midwest. However, shortly after arriving, vocalist Per had not one but two seizures. It blows my mind (no pun intended), but he recovered in a day—neither dead nor physically impaired. After missing that first show, he was able to play the second show in Rochester, and then go on with the rest of the tour. They hit up Montreal (for A Varning In Montreal) next, then Boston and Philadelphia. On these shows they were joined by Pittsburgh's noise pogo punx EEL. Baltimore was their first show without the touring local support, and Cleveland the night after that.

I first saw Sex Dwarf at their Varning show. Their set was on the Friday, and they were my favorite band that night. They had a lot of energy and didn't waste any time fucking around, all killer and no filler. They performed in overdrive whether they had any reaction or not—guitar jumps, head banging, guitar noise bleeding out of one song and into the next. It was fast and wild and exciting and over before anyone could catch up to this explosion of raw and out-of-control noise punk in front of them. At the end of the set, one of them put down their guitar and jumped into the crowd, seconds later getting spat back onto the stage. The wall of noise ended. I went looking for merch but missed it, and decided to check out more of their stuff when I got back to Australia. After this fest, I flew to visit friends in Cleveland, a city which was on their tour schedule for a few days later.

CLEVELAND (Wednesday, November 12th, 2014): I walked into the almost empty, dimly lit, yet all too familiar *Now That's Class…!* and down to the basement where the show was on. A large chandelier and table had been added, oddly placed, since the last time I was there. It was like looking at a Mercedes in a trailer park—kind of wrong but strangely at home. Thrope from BAD NOIDS was doing takings at the door. Bad Noids were supposed to be on this show but Jake the drummer bailed, so they canned their set. First on instead were Cleveland locals PRISON MOAN. They had just released their demo earlier that month on Saucepan, and I thought they were decent for a new band. Short songs, hardcore punk with Reagan Youth sounds.

The rest of the line-up was from out of town, and had all been on the bill at Varning. The HOLIDAYS, on second, was a one-man band touring though from Philly with the STASI, who were on after him. He played guitar, with only a recorded guitar track behind him to create depth. He emitted so much crazy energy that it would be interesting to see how it worked as a whole band. Alone it also said a lot in terms of individual anger and being a loner, showing his determination to do a band without trying to involve or rely on anyone else. Snotty screams into the mic had his face purple, his stance low with head held high to yell at everything looking down on him. He broke a string on his guitar, and a few songs later broke a string on the Sex Dwarf guitar he had borrowed to continue his set. Lots of "1-2-3-4!"s, and from his live performance he became a band I respect and rate. The STASI were on next. I'd dug them at Varning; this performance was a little more low-key but still emitting the good tunes that made me pick up a tape the first time around. By this point I was fairly toasty. I was taking photos, which all turned out blurry, and getting in on the mosh; feeling reckless and having fun. As previously mentioned, Sex Dwarf were headlining the show. I was fuzzy during their set and don't remember the finer details, but when they finished we tried to get them play another song—which didn't happen. I helped them load out and then jumped in the van to continue drinking with them back where they were staying the night. We ended up partying 'til dawn, cranking tunes, and chatting. By that sunrise I'd agreed to go on tour with them and they picked me up the next day before they left for Chicago.

CHICAGO (Thursday, November 13th, 2014): It was midday and I was on the freeway in an eight-seater van leaving Cleveland in the direction of Chicago, IL. There was a light snowfall, which started in Cleveland when I was bringing out my bags to load them in the van. Jimmy from RATFACE / EEL was driving and Kid from Konton Crasher Records was in the front passenger seat DJing, assisting with directions, and providing general driver company. Foat, Per and Nikke had the middle row and were chatting between each other and with the two up front. Per was in some '80s Swedish punk bands, including PROTES BENGT and FILTHY CHRISTIANS. Nikke used to live in Sydney, Australia and was an original member of DEATHCAGE. I got the back middle seat. The speakers in the back were loud and you couldn't hear the conversation going on in the front, so whoever was in the back (Michel and me the whole time, the third person changed around) ended up sleeping, sitting quietly listening to music, sleeping (there was a lot of sleeping), or drinking.

After long truck stop breaks, snoozes, loud music, long talks, YouTube videos and an intense snowstorm (I assume it was intense, it's the first I've ever seen and thought it was pretty neat), we got to Chicago. We loaded in and got some food from the closest place. The venue was an empty and slightly trashed storefront called Mount Happy Space. Fairy lights lit up the end of the basement where the bands were on, and the merch was set up in the cold light near the stairs. I ended up hanging around the merch table most of the night, helping Foat and Kid taking care of it for the rest of the trip. It's a good place to stand and hang out, and gives you something to do when you aren't fucked up enough to mingle with the social surroundings.

Supporting the show in this city were RUMORES, VIOLENT END and KRANG. RUMORES was on first and I dug their sound. Same with VIOLENT END, except the first band was punk and the second was hardcore. Both were tight and had good tunes. KRANG would have been good if they cut out the bad bits, which was about half the set. Good bits and bad bits. Couldn't agree on a sound, and if they were trying to mix genres, they forgot to stir the recipe. There wasn't a big turnout, maybe 40 people. Still good for a weeknight show, and people that attended were into the different bands, watching, moshing and pogoing. The

show wasn't a late one, starting around 9 p.m. and finishing around midnight.

We left and stayed north of Chicago with one of the guys from VIOLENT END. I assume everyone stayed up late and partied but I went off and found some cushions to snag in his basement, catching up on some sleep that I'd missed partying in Cleveland the night before.

Waking early after little sleep, I did some laundry and waited around until everyone else started to get up a few hours later. We went to grab some local diner food before leaving the city, a few of us smoking a fat joint on the way. Trying to hold it together and ask questions about vegan options was a nightmare, I didn't know what was going on. We finally left and got on the road to Minneapolis. "Missiles" by the SOUND was blasted as we burnt rubber; it was the song of the tour.

To be continued in next month's column.

If punk is dead now then when did it live? When did it have its hey days, when everything that it was destined to fulfill was a living reality? When Malcom Mclaren was selling ugly clothes in Chelsea or when the Ramones wrote rock and roll songs about sniffing glue and horror movies? When Crass was walking around naked in a squatted garden using anarchy as an excuse not to do the dishes? When Tampax and Hitler SS played under a bridge on cartoon instruments and decided that they would rather just hang at home? When Spions (the Hungarian Electric Eels) wrote songs in English because the communist regime was too stupid to understand foreign languages? Or when Los Saicos started playing mutant surf rock in Peru before anyone? When did it reach the wall where everything started to sound not only boring but as much a redundant reproduction of the sound in question that it felt useless to play and probably listen to ever again? Already with Outsiders? Nasal Boys? Johnny Moped or what? Was it Less Than Jake? Nah, they are too cool. Sup, all my friends who are metalheads? Hardcore died when good bands started playing dad rock and everyone forgot to notice and keep in mind the Crucifucks, Deep Wound, Spike In Vain, United Mutation, Die Kreuzen, Outpatients, Really Red. Rather they realized baggy pants are more comfy and you can listen and play metal even with short hair. Everything else still lives, that Guns and Roses cover band just played for a packed house and the uprise of western civilization part two is right at the corner.

Have you realized that people who tend to bury culture are always living in a plastic bag located a hundred feet deep under the ground? If you can't find something you are looking for then that could mean you are still not looking hard enough or in the exact right place. It also could mean that you have invented something that is waiting for you to actually create it or you expect things that never existed and you live with false definitions in your head. I hated it when everyone called everything punk. Fucking freakish, trashy drum and bass was called punk because it was loud and fast and noisy and was easier to listen to it under the influence of drugs and booze. But no, punk is a word used for punk things. It doesn't define just anything that is vaguely awesome or the truest shit. It defines many things but not everything that is great. So stop calling jazz, British invasion, kraut rock, garage, surf, rock and roll, psych, and metal bands punk and start calling yourself either illiterate or a punk who listens to other music. Don't be an Eskimo standing in a desert wondering, how weird the snow is here.

I would puke in the face of those who say fun begins outside your comfort zone because I really hate everything all the time when I'm not in my bed, eating pizza, listening to the Fall and receiving a back rub. Being lazy and boring is no comfort. To learn and have fun while doing it takes time and work for sure but if you are not doing it inside your comfort zone why the fuck do you do it anyway? Ha?!

I deleted everything from my mp3 player because I felt awful wasting my time listening to the three same albums when I had two hundred other records on my player's memory beside them. Most of them I have now on actual records that stand on my shelf and I decided to divide my music listening into three different environments: at home, at work, and while travelling. At home I spin my records. I tend to pile them up at the beginning of the weekend and listen my way through them. Because I have my laptop and wifi at home, that's also where I search for new music. At work I like to listen to long albums that not just take more time to hear but where the whole record blends into a structure of songs, not just one tune after another. While travelling I used to reach for my feel good acts but life is not a movie (since we take films more serious than actual reality), thus I abandoned the concept of me listening to soundtrack-esque hits which is mostly MF Doom, for an eastern European white guy in dad clothes.

I want to discover bands even while I sneak around the streets of Budapest so my rule is not putting anything on my mp3 player that is too easy to listen to. And now I have 200 albums that have the same chance to be digitally spanned by me. And I love it because this is my comfort zone, which has now been expanded to the streets, where I listen to new music or already familiar songs in a different state of mind. This is music I have to work for a little bit, that needs my attention, music I don't already know even when I don't listen to it. Just today I went out to buy Club Mate and cherry juice while listening to Barcelona's *Extremo Nihilismo En Barcelona*, Confuse' *Stupid Life* and H.H.H.'s *Intellectual Punks* and Contrazione 's *Cineocchio! Storia E Memoria*. It was also such a joyful trip when I was taking a bus a bit tipsy and blasted Räjäyttäjät's *Rock 'n' Roll Painajainen* or some other time when I was nerding out on Warum Joe's *Toccare La Verita*. Is that fuckwave?

So if a comfort zone is where you can be lazy and boring then I want to exist outside of that but if it means where you have fun on your own rules than fuck society and the outside world and I want to eat my mind pizza in MY NEW HOUSE, MY NEW HOUSE.

Probably what always calms down the tension to a boring state of calling the scene where you consume culture a comfort zone is the rise of mediocrity among its doers, which I have nothing against. That's great when almost everything is at least average and not either super amazing or really bad. In punk only two things are bad: when people try to play shitty music in a shitty way or when they play shitty music in a really good way. But going out to a show seeing a band perform a solid set that you forget while travelling home and listening to Flipper is not a bad night at all.

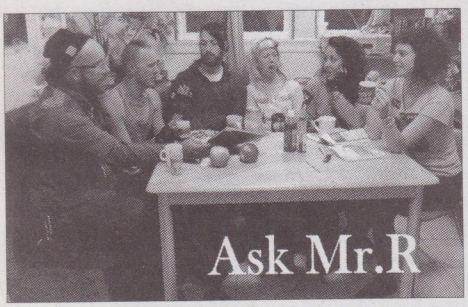
Nowadays sometimes it feels like everybody is doing everything so the focus is switched from those who produce to those who are judging the creative outputs. Truth being said I had more sex over my fanzines than I did for my bands, while I write as a lazy and stupid school paper press gang goof but dance on stage as Prince on acid. But it's terrible right? This world is obscene when people whose work I adore write me e-mails that they liked what and how I have written about them. It should be the other way around.

I reached a point during the write-up for the Year End Top Ten where I realized that since everything is so instant nowadays bands are forming to play a genre that is in the spotlight rather than just stepping out from the shadow into the spotlight that is focused on their style of sound. These bands lack the main reason why I really love to listen to music: Hearing people play whatever they think is cool. These protocol bands are playing what is in other people's favor, which even if executed in a real decent way is super dumb because these bands couldn't exist without anyone's attention, and this is why I skip them—because I don't have to hear it to know what they play. It's not only dark, gothic post-punk/deathrock that I always kick around in my column along with Oi!-influenced hardcore but generic KDB hardcore punk and, well, bedroom noise hardcore, too, all drowning me with their uncountable amount of demos, EPs, break ups and last shows. I accept it, these are sub-genres with their own rules that might differ from mine. The music is only bad when the listener is bad.

I like it better when there is more to discover than what I hear for the first time or when there is nothing else but that indescribable quality, luck, charm of music writing that creates awkward feelings that make you hostile so you give in, fall into Stockholm syndrome and embrace the sounds. Interesting music not only could mean chaos but also exact separable parts organized in a way that is shocking. I want ideas. Not intelligence but people with a will that reeks from unstoppable innocence. The more fucked up their ideas are the more interesting to music will be for me. Let it be Buck Biloxi and the Fucks, Deformity, or the new Rákosi recordings. I need to hear that force which made the music happen. I love how under certain circumstances guitars can end up as an inconceivable buzz that leaves space for imagination as to what the player's intention was with using such mutual code to transmit information, where I am welcomed to guess what the fuck is happening.

It doesn't mean I only listen to the most unique bands, who live outside the box. If I were in a band whose sound I couldn't describe in any way maybe I would succeed as a musician who I don't want to be and fail as a listener and as a result my music would be just shit. Because after all, I want to make music I want to hear and selfishly it would be great if other people would think the same and produce more music I want to hear.

vargyai.viktor@gmail.com



I don't think anyone should take advice, but there are probably a lot of things for the punks to talk about, and we might as well do it here. Think of it more as an opinion *column though.*
(...and if we need a tagline for that I hope it can be something as vague as: "A column for people who are intrigued by the subtle differences between the 'punks' and the 'punx.'")

You guys, I'm answering two etiquette questions this month like I'm Ms. Manners or something. I can't believe all these Punk Charm School classes are finally paying off. Text a question to 510-585-HELP! Apparently you can also call that number and leave a message like a weirdo. Send an e-mail if you're checked out societally: ASKMRR@MAIL.COM.

Dear Mr.R,

Punk etiquette question: how long do you have to wait after your band breaks up before you can start wearing your own band's t-shirt?

Times when it seems unquestionably reasonable to wear your own band shirt whether you're broken up or not: when you're going to sleep (night shirt), when you're doing something gross/messy (cleaning toilet/dying hair), when you're hanging out at the laundromat (nothing else to wear), etc. And it probably goes without saying but these times seem acceptable because they're purely casual situations and there is no sense of self-promotion attached to an outfit. In fact, I think maybe the only time people tend to begrudge anyone the chance to happily wear their own band shirt in a public space is when they feel the shirt is being worn too humorlessly. For example, if you were to see Henry Rollins wearing a Black Flag shirt you'd be all "What a dick", but conversely, if you happened to see Janelle Hessig in a Panty Raid or Wet Spots t-shirt, you might think "What a cool shirt, I wonder if she has any more of those in her garage?"

Part of what makes someone like Henry Rollins especially easy to judge is obviously that he is mostly ego and the shirt is just holding it together, but another element is a response to being forced to see a person try too hard to hold on to their punk legacy. Henry Rollins in a Black Flag shirt would feel like seeing a divorcee wandering around in their stained old wedding dress trying to remind you they were in a relationship once. It's okay to be single, Henry. Trying desperately to hang on to old cred can be worse than having no cred at all. Whereas friendly, active punk, and own-band-shirt-wearers like Janelle Hessig or Toody Cole don't inspire that same sort of reaction.

I do not want these possible judgments to be confused for clothing law, however. Some people have decided it is just a "rule" to not wear your own band shirts ever, no matter what, and you can decide to believe that too, but those people are also generally the same people who claim leggings can't be worn as pants, even though they clearly work just as well with leg coverage, and also provide an extended ease of motion that pants do not. That shit doesn't make any sense. Remember: Fashion cops are still cops.

Dear Mr.R,

Would it be irresponsible of me to go to a show with something like the flu or strep knowing I could potentially get people sick? What's the etiquette? Is there some kind of sickness severity limit? Cause I'm pretty sure I caught it at a show, and I really don't want to sit this one out.

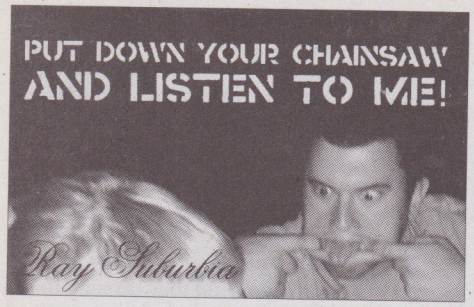
—Minor Strep

I'm glad you're at least keeping your perspective. It's important to remember that other people don't deserve to be infected as some sort of revenge on the scene that has forsaken you. And you're gonna have to make your own judgment call, seeing as how sickness severity is in the eye of the beholder and all. If you know you're someone who has a large capacity for lying to yourself, maybe good guidelines for clear case-to-case decision making should be asking yourself some questions. "Am I contagious?" is a good one, or "Could there be a person at the show who has a compromised immune system?" Or you could even remind yourself that some jerk at a show totally already got you sick and why would they do something like that to you? In honor of the recently passed comic art issue of *MRR*, I also suggest that if you're more of a visual person, you can draw yourself your own personal version of the Wong Baker Face Pain chart that doctors use to determine the level of discomfort a patient is really experiencing. You don't even have to be creative, you can use emojis if it's easier. Angry devil face? Stay home.

We, as show-goers, generally have to trust that sickness will take a person out of commission before we are required to act like somebody's parents and create concrete definitions of what constitutes *too sick* for them to be in public, but normally we will accept that if you feel well enough to actually make it to the show in the first place, and you aren't too foggy to feel guilty about what you're potentially doing to everyone, then, eeehhhh, you can probably attend in good conscience—just don't share anybody's beer and cigarettes, and remember to warn your close talker hugging friends to stay a couple feet away, and we'll go along with your decision. Last year there was a Saturday show at Gilman where so many people came down with norovirus, that the germs hung around and infected twenty or thirty more people for the following Sunday matinee show. The Sunday line-up included a touring band who headed off to Reno directly after they left Gilman. Whole punk houses were quarantined. It was terrible. Though I personally dodged that week of poo and puke by escaping right after Courtney and the Crushers played, sometimes I fear I have a sort of Final Destination cloud hanging over me now. Like I'm a person on the run just because of some Typhoid Mary who couldn't deal with a little afternoon FOMO. If you're sick there's no shame in staying home and watching old episodes of *Maury* on youtube and ensuring this doesn't happen to anyone again.

Unsolicited Bonus Etiquette Tip! When wearing your backpack to the show, be conscious of others around you, and the amount of extra space you are taking up. You will most certainly be hitting people in the face with that thing while trying to squeeze to the front of the stage, or even over and over again as you swing around doing that punk dance thing. Don't make other show-goers suffer just so that you can take your comic book collection for a night on the town.

Text questions to 510-585-HELP. Send emails to ASKMRR@MAIL.COM.



"Gotta fix my brain."
— "Fix My Brain," Marked Men

You all realize I'm crazy, right? Like, not Steve Martin arrow-through-the-head wild'n'crazy guy crazy. Or Rico Rodgriguez and his Band, *You Must Be Crazy* crazy. Or wearing shorts when it's 40 degrees out crazy. (Actually, yeah, I sometimes am that – but that's not what I'm getting at here.)

I am literally, medically, certifiably, pathologically, got the papers to prove it, crazy.

I've never been one for euphemistic bullshit, so I prefer not use the term "mentally ill" or say that I have a "mental illness." Fuck that bullshit. I'm crazy. And if I have to deal with being crazy... so do you.

I don't really talk about this much with other people because, well, I'd rather talk about music, or history, or zines, or pretty much anything else. I don't really like publicly talking, or writing, about my personal shit that much anymore—cause I'm crazy and say crazy shit about my crazy thoughts and crazy feelings. So when I do, I prefer talking about what I'm doing, or planning on doing. Or just telling stories that I happen to be involved in—cause sitting around telling stories is the best thing in the world. Yes. Even better than D-beat. There's also the whole thing where people get *really* uncomfortable when you bring up the fact that you might be a little touched in the head (that also being the only euphemism for being nutso that I like, because it's fucking hilarious).

I was raised by couple of really smart, caring, hardworking parents. They both came to this country with their families to have a better life than they had in their old countries. They wanted opportunity and a sense of fairness that, while not perfect, was more along the lines of what they believed in—for better or worse. There's something about first generation immigrants that, for the most part, keeps them from asking for help. I know among my parents, and their immigrant friends, there is a mentality that getting into the country—however so—was help enough. Now that you're here, you shouldn't need any more.

My mother is a very proud woman. She was put on a plane with her brother and sent to a suburb of St. Louis. They didn't know anyone, and they didn't speak the language. She wasn't even a teenager. Eventually, she worked her way through school and earned a Ph.D. in psychology, with a focus on children's psychology. Like my father, who was told by his high school guidance counselor that he should reconsider trying to become an engineer and become a carpenter instead because "[our] people are good with [our] hands," and then became a public school administrator to make sure no one (at least under his watch) would ever get away with saying that shit to a fucking kid, my mother took to the schools.

For the majority of my life so far my mother worked for the Waukegan public school district in Northern Illinois. Her job was to test kids to see if they needed personalized placement or programs. One of the things that pissed her off most—and still does, even though she's mostly retired—is how often immigrant children, or children of immigrants, would be placed in special needs classes or behavior modification classes.

"Obviously Cristina is retarded, and that Juan, well, he just *refuses* to listen or behave."

A lot of the time there was a much more simple, and less pathological answer: *they didn't know the fucking language that well.* She wanted to help these kids and their families out. Because in the cases where the children did have special needs, chances were that recent immigrants didn't have the knowledge of the resources available to them. She made it her life's profession to make sure that kids that were smart weren't treated otherwise just because they were new to this country, or culture, or language.

So for the longest time during my childhood I was the control group for my mom's children psych tests. She *knew* I was fine. I was smart, I was well-adjusted. I was her kid, and my father's kid—two amazingly normal, intelligent, and hardworking parents. Whenever her schools would get new testing kits to evaluate children, she would have me sit in our dining room on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon and take them. Promises of video rentals, pizzas, and sleepovers were given, but only after I spent three hours working out my cognitive skills on paper. She knew I was a smart, normal kid, so if the test results showed that I was special needs, or anything along those lines, she knew that specific testing kit wasn't a reliable gauge. Pretty handy.

Fast forward.

Spring 2010. I'm working my job in the preservation department of the university in Carbondale, IL. I've been having a kinda, but not particularly, bad couple of weeks. Work stress, rent stress, girlfriend stress, band stress—normal stuff. But my behavior has been much more irrational. Large amounts of what I could only now call violent binge drinking. Smoking weed like I needed it to breathe. Just doing a lot of things to alter my mental state.

Mostly because I couldn't stand my brain.

So I'm working on repairing some 100+ year old books for the second day in a row. Very intense and precise work. The lab that I worked in was outfitted with all kinds of tools you would (and wouldn't) expect, in what is basically a university's intellectual goods repair shop. One of the tools that I used, on a daily basis – one that was assigned to me and giving to me to have personally—was a medical grade scalpel. When working on books that are sometimes centuries old, the precision of the repairs needed can be often be medically exact.

I'm sitting there, fixing this book, while also having a very intense and personal argument with a close friend/ex-roommate/ex-bandmate. The kind of of argument that could easily get very personal and nasty very fucking quickly.

Surprise.

It did.

Things get more intense. A feeling of panic washes over and starts seeping into my brain as I'm watching my phone light up with messages like, "Well, if you're so depressed why don't you just fucking kill yourself. You're already dead to enough people anyway."

I look between the phone and the scalpel, and for a split second think, "I mean, it would be *really* fucking easy."

Fast forward.

Four hours later I'm having my legal status being changed from "voluntary commitment" to "involuntary commitment." Based on the psych doctor's discretion at the Mulberry Center at Harrisburg.

Rewind.

1996. I get sent to Catholic high school, after going to public school for my entire life. I wasn't informed of this decision until I went to get my photo ID for the local high school and they told me I wasn't in their system. So, of course, being forced to go to Catholic school meant I didn't give a fuck about anything. My parents saw my misbehavior and general apathy and mood swings as endemic of teenagedom. Hormones and new surroundings were the reason why I was acting so strange. "He'll grow out of it." For while—even after the fact—I thought so myself.

Nope.

Towards the end of that year my dad realized that something was going on, and brought up that I should probably see someone. My mom, of course, was completely against it. Personal and professional pride.

I was soon on the first of many medications I would end up trying over the years.

Being that this was the swinging '90s of Clinton I got put on the ubiquitously popular Prozac. Unfortunately for me, the combination of children's institutional scheduling (pills before going to first class, lunch at 11 am—always) left me throwing up my food every single day for the better part of a year. Not only did this work against the drug, but also left me with a bit of a bulimia problem that took some time to get a handle on.

So next up, Paxil.

Again, no luck.

At about this point in my life, my relationship with my parents became very strained. My mother had completely given up on me. "I already got what I wanted out of life, two kids—a girl and a boy. So if you

don't care whether you live or die, well, I don't either." My dad, bless his heart, tried to do his best, but I was definitely too much to handle at times—sometimes he just couldn't handle that. Looking back, it was so fucking obvious that my depression was actually just the beginning symptoms of schizophrenia.

For better, or worse, those early terrible experiences with pharmaceuticals left me against all kinds of professional help. So I stopped taking meds all together, for a very long time.

Fast forward.

2006/2007. My then girlfriend, and future ex-fiancée, and I are having yet another toxic and mutually verbally abusive argument. This time at my house in Milwaukee. I'm wasted and probably on speed, and there's a very good chance she's matched me, if not left me in the dust. I can't say for certain because I can't remember for certain. There was *a lot* of Holiday Spice consumed that night.

Our argument escalates to the point, that even though we're in a room full of people—our close friends—we're going at it like it's thunderdome. The argument ends with me being pinned to the ground by our friends while full-on, top of the lungs, screaming at her. Held down...just in case. But, for real. As they do this she leaves to stay the night somewhere else.

We were both completely out of control.

But mostly me.

It was time to try meds again.

I saw a specialist and got put on Lexapro. And again, it just didn't work out. My stomach couldn't handle it. Also, it didn't help that I was still drinking and doing any and all drugs that wandered into my line of vision. Within six months I was off of the meds. And as much as I thought it was fine, my drinking had gotten completely out of hand. I rationalized that I didn't need meds—as long as I cut back on my drinking. You know, to no more than a six-pack a day and no more than a pint of liquor at a time.

Unless there was a show. Or band practice. Or I was hanging out with friends.

Not long after that we get into another argument. Again, in public. This one involving her whipping a full can of beer at the back of my head from five feet away, and my smashing my head open on the sidewalk.

Fast forward.

So I'm about a week in at the psych unit. The driest and most sober I had been in eight years. One week of absolutely no alcohol. I'm on a new med, Risperdal. The doctor asked about my psych and med history. Along with my drinking and drug use. For the first time I was 100% honest with anyone, including myself, about all of that. After some tests, some observations, group work, etc., she came back with her diagnosis. Schizophrenia. With severe bouts of detachment due to alcohol. Basically, I was crazy—but my drinking made me *fucking crazy*.

I get out of the hospital, and head back to my regular life. I take the med regularly for some time. And guess what? It fucking works! Well, for a little bit. It doesn't affect my stomach, but within a couple of months I start gaining a crazy amount of weight, and get completely dead mentally. I can't write, can't come up with new music, stop making art, stop responding to booking requests. Don't give a fuck about anything. Nothing. Don't fucking care.

So I stop with the meds.

Haven't gone back.

It's been a few years since and I'm now part of a class action suit against the makers of Risperdal for physical issues generated from use of the med. Needless to say, my faith in pharmaceuticals to "fix" my problems is no longer there. Instead of looking to pop an easy cure from a bottle, I've found better ways to clear my head. Personal ones not made in a lab to be sold to the masses in order to make as much money on a patent as possible. I take the time to write, I ride my bike a lot more regularly—not just as a vehicle to commute to work with, I have seriously cut back on drinking and drugs. That has helped. A lot.

Still, people get weird when A) they find out that I'm schizophrenic and B) find out that I don't take meds for it. I once told a bandmate that I stopped taking my meds and he, very seriously, asked me if I was going to do something crazy like stab him. I had a roommate/co-worker knock on my bedroom door once, after they read something I wrote on the internet about the class action suit, and ask me if I was ok, and if I was still taking meds, or needed to take meds. This person never treated me the same again afterward and would occasionally make comments along the lines of, "Sometimes it's like you're two different people."

I know you all like watching movies and reading stories about crazy people. Cause we're pretty fucking interesting. Duh. But the whole multiple personality thing, that's not quite exactly how schizophrenia works. I wish it did. I could probably get a fat movie deal out of it. But instead I have to deal with panic attacks, immensely awkward social interactions, self-therapy, and all kinds of tedious mental shit.

So what's the moral to this story?

Nothing.

There isn't one.

It's just a story.

And people never seem to want to share their stories of mental illness, being crazy, acting irrationally nutso—for whatever reason. I just wanted to throw mine out there.

I'm pretty cool with being crazy. If nothing else, I'm never bored.

I try to take care of myself the best I can, address the fucked up brain issues I've got in a responsible way. But sometimes I just don't. Let's be real. That's how it is. How most of us are. *Cause we're crazy.*

All I'm trying to do here is open up about this kinda shit. Just trying to start conversation. I got no clue as to what to do. Or the best way to go about anything. You probably don't either.

Shit.

Maybe you do.

Who knows? Maybe we should talk about it.

How have *you* been feeling lately?

So I thought I might flake on writing a column for this month but instead I'm turning in a rambler. I go on tour for a couple weeks tomorrow with my improv guitar/saxophone duo called The Blues and it will be so, so groovy, I know it. Mostly I am currently in a get in the van state where all last minute tie ups really involve nothing and don't matter but I want to be at the movement point so I can be like, "Nothing matters, can't do anything anyways," buy a toothbrush at a gas station or whatever.

I have been realizing lately that maybe I'm a weird combo of moody and go with the flow (I guess everybody is) but my lack of giving a shit about most things sometimes makes me wonder if I'm apathetic or disengaged in a shit way or something. Like I just don't really get super excited about shit mostly. I really, really don't understand why everyone seems to get excited and squirrely in the face of dogs or babies. For real, seriously don't get it.

It's 10 a.m. and I'm listening to Sheer Mag because I went to their show yesterday but didn't pay to get in (therefore didn't go in—I'm the turd that'll hang outside and peek in the door, but I def don't badger my way in if I'm not paying) and didn't stay for their set anyway. It was a "don't care" combo of I straight had never heard them and was having the teenage mentality of "everyone is flipping out about this shit so I don't care" cool kid nothingness. Also it was at the record store that—don't get me wrong, has all ages shows and that's nice and all—but I feel they paint themselves as a community resource and yeah, they got the all ages space which is very important and vital but at the end of the day they are a for-profit business that pulled a charity campaign in the name of maintaining the show space but really used that chunk of change to expand the store part.

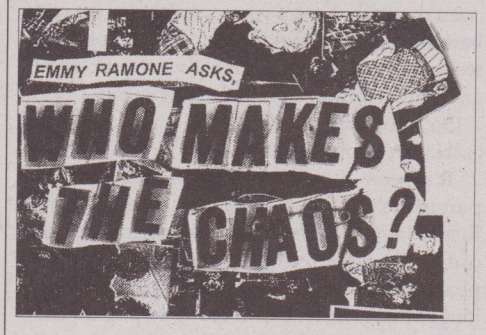
Whatever.

So anyway I stayed up until 4 a.m. doing nothing last night. Or I played guitar for an hour and then spent three hours watching TV on the internet. But to what I was saying before, I indulge in the tradition of being stubbornly against a hype band until after they pass through town because I'm a jerk but I'm

listening to this (Sheer Mag) now and I like it because it's otherwise whatever but its got these Dinosaur Jr. solos I dig. At the core I have a major soft spot for long hair guitar jammage. (Does Sheer Mag have long hair?) I was reading about them (Dinosaur Jr.) in *This Band Could Be Your Life*, which is a book I have mixed feelings about. I mean, listen, I am not a Minutemen fan (just not my thing) but that chapter about them got me *pumped*. Like just in a very real relating to ideologies and being excited about living weirdo life way. But other than that chapter a lot of that book I've been kind of generally like "shut the fuck up" but more than that, it's definitely a bummer that all bands featured in the book are basically *all men*, as if women didn't matter or straight didn't exist. And this is the first thing that the book is lacking that jumps out at me because I'm self-absorbed but also just not really any people of color, not really any queers, and its like really? And I wonder, maybe I should have read it as a teenager? But I also remember as a teen being so frustrated by the lack of female punks to emulate. But I guess Kim Gordon was enough to want to be (still want to be) but I remember latching on to *anything*.

So tomorrow I go on a relatively short tour. I'm pretty broke which will cut into my eating adventures (I'm a sucker for regional foods) but I will survive, it'll be fine. And I deeply believe that financially there is never a "good" time to go on tour, like how the "perfect" place to live doesn't exist, I mean, because generally real life sucks. But back to finances, I have been perpetually broke since I got back from that European jaunt I took (boo hoo, right?) so I had a rash of applying for second jobs and I landed myself at a bead shop updating an ancient website, but really those details don't matter. What I'm trying to say or what I'm getting at, uff, hold on.

So a thing I've noticed/endured/whatever is the weird expectation that at a retail or whatever business it seems like you're expected to give a fuck about said institution. In the first ten minutes of my first day at this job in a fucking bead shop my boss questioned my commitment to the job because I wasn't breaking prior commitments in favor of said job. Either way it seemed like a bizarre sentiment but doubly because I'm sitting there at this job that's like ten hours a fucking week that's paying me half of what I make at my other job and this woman is bumming because this job is obviously not a high priority for me. *Fuck you*, for reals, *fuck you*. It's possible to show up somewhere consistently and in a timely manner and complete tasks competently without giving a flying fuck because guess what? This is what I do and what I've done at basically every job I've ever had and I've been working at jobs for fifteen-plus years. I don't give a fuck about store goals or your business expanding because most likely either way I'll still be making the same hourly wage. I don't have a passion for ugly jewelry, I have a passion for jobs that don't take up a lot of time or mental space that help me pay my stupid bills. I don't want my work to follow me home, I wanna go somewhere, clock in, clock out and then fucking forget about it and go home and listen to Chrome while eating cookies in my underwear. *Alone.*



"Let's all yell so we'll be heard"
— "Brickwall," Big Boys

This week I went and got a big ol' Big Boys tattoo. I really hate the idea of having a "favorite" band because taste and music is always changing and honestly most people's favorite bands are probably pretty postured, but Big Boys are probably my favorite band.

The question of what makes a band so fantastic that you believe to love them more than all other bands you've ever heard is extremely perplexing and trying to answer it definitely reinforces my feelings that having a favorite band ever is pretty ridiculous. While I won't say Big Boys are a better or more enjoyable bands than other bands I've loved and been inspired by throughout my young life, the more I think about it the more I really do fucking love this band unlike I have ever known.

I've always felt music should come from the soul and emotions of a person. As Sun Ra often spoke of, things like tuning to your soul and not precision. I appreciate when people are creating audio works that take an artistic method of working to display their emotions or message. I don't care much for music made in the method of sounding a preconceived way, or even worse "easy listening." Easy listening is to music what Big Lots artwork is to the art world. It's so shit and useless it becomes destructive. It's a tool for people who hate thinking and having an opinion. It's a blanket cause to support like peace, love, or the troops. Fucking shit. That's why I'm most attracted to music that values passion, creativity, and expression over talent and being relatable. Most simply, punk music fits into that category generally better than most. But if I had to chizzle the Mount Rushmore of people who did an accurate job of just pushing their message and themselves so far outside of what the world needed, wanted, or had I think I would be chizzling out people like Sun Ra, Jimi Hendrix, Yamantaka Eye, and Biscuit. Big Boys certainly didn't invent the wheel for punk music and their influence in punk music today is far from that of Discharge or Minor Threat but their importance is to punk music is like none other. The '80s hardcore scene created a lot of avenues for future punk bands to base themselves off of—it gave a rather undefinable genre not only a lot of definition but a lot of different ones. Big Boys did the opposite. Instead of tunneling through boring mountain they blew it up with fucking dynamite. They left room for creativity and expression while many bands of the times inadvertently pigeonholed such things.

Within the '80s, what we know as punk now was beginning to take shape in the DIY sense. There are numerous amazing examples set ethically by bands of the time as far as what it meant to be a band and operate amongst a community, but few punk bands seemed to tune into that ethic in any form but aggression and anger. Big Boys however did the opposite. They wanted to be fun, they wanted to be themselves, they took what was special about punk and themselves as people and "tuned to their souls." Most of Tim Kerr's guitar playing isn't even standard chords—they just worked to make music that represented them, and it turned out punk. When I listen to Big Boys I don't think, "I wanna be in a band that sound just like this." I think, "I wanna be in a band that does whatever the fuck we want" which to my understanding seemed to be the goal. I mean, what a fantastic message to take with you. They did a really fantastic job as band using their space to create more, with the echoes of "Now go start your own band" being shouted after every show and songs like "Fight Back," which is basically a PSA of how to get involved and take your place. I find it not only inspirational but encouraging. So much old punk talk has mutated into some "We did it first" pissing contest. It fucking sucks when you find a band you love and the singer is like, "Go get your own scene." It troubles me to think of how miserable a person you have to be to think A) what you did isn't worthwhile enough for people to enjoy and/or B) to feel some sort of ownership over something because you had fun doing it at one time. In a punk world that seems to suffer as much as always to open up space for people to create music that they genuinely need to create, and output expression unlike few have ever touched, it is inspiring to look at Big Boys, one of the first queer bands, one of the most interesting punk bands ever, who came from a place so ethically bleak as Texas and know your space to be someone fun and different was opened up by such an amazing band.

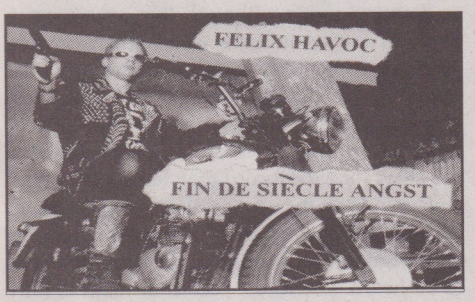
Musically they are nearly impossible to pigeonhole, from their funky basslines, their screaming guitar, and commanding vocals to soft, almost dark feeling anthems. Big Boys made music like few others without ever leaving a hint of doubt in their message and goal. The music plays as an honest soundtrack to their ethics and each album represents itself as a statement for the bands existence. From *Fun, Fun, Fun* living on as a full-length anthem to make music, skateboarding, and art fun and honest; to *Where's My Towel/Industry Standard*

voicing their frustrations with those trying to combat their honesty, it all plays its part in painting the picture as to why the Big Boys are such an incredible band. Big Boys have been the biggest inspiration to me in all my bands, my zine, the flyers I make, the art I make; they give me the urge to create and remind me how necessary originality is. I have a lot of really stupid tattoos that really make such a statement of their importance irrelevant but I feel very good about being able to hold on to this doodle forever, 'cause you know Big Boys make me think of really important messages: Be yourself and have fun doing it. Yeah, it's cheesy, but at the end of the day that's all I really need to know.

In closing notes: it isn't miserable to be outside anymore and I'm feeling way better about that than I thought I would be. Columbus and the Midwest have seemed to go from 0-100 real quick as far as punk goes. There's like a sick show in this stupid fucking cow town every week now it seems like and I am not complaining. If you're in central Ohio check out the Legion of Doom's summer shitlist and swoop a Columbus Sucks Because You Suck calendar. I think there are about 400x more punk bands here than last summer and it's really exciting—most notably Minority Threat!, an all-Black nasty sounding hardcore band featuring my favorite fucker Winston (of every other band in this town). When the students all move back to Mommy and Daddy's to work their summer jobs as lifeguards and golf caddies we're gonna get really fucking nasty. All the *Cretins of Distortion* shit is still available as fuck at bugcartel.storenvy.com and I'll be at Chicago Zine Fest pissing off all the hipster scrapbookers. If you're there say sup and I'll give some fireworks and shit. I'm also doing a reading with awesome people to support Black and Brown collective.

Are you ready to take a stand?
Make a fanzine, make a band
You're telling me you got something to say
Quit your bitching, there's a way!
FIGHT BACK!!

Now go start your own band!!!!



Back again after being busy with some projects outside of punk. If you have tried to press a record lately, you know that every pressing plant in the USA is backed up months in advance. Every plant is running at full capacity—most are expanding—but you would be hard pressed to find any plant with less than a three month turnaround right now. My last project took almost five months to get pressed. Punk has always been strong on vinyl, and I feel like punk and hip-hop kept pressing plants going when the mainstream turned away from it. Now that vinyl is back in the mainstream, and things like Record Store Day tie down capacity for four months a year, the punk labels are getting the shaft. In fact, several of the big indie labels are setting up their own pressing plants because they can't get decent service from any of the established ones. Setting up a pressing plant is not an easy undertaking—it requires a lot of specialized equipment, licensing and a plant with a steam boiler to run the presses. I wish anyone diving into this the best of luck. The demand is roaring back but the capacity will be tight for some time to come.

Which brings me to the other side of the picture. Who is buying all these records? Sales at stores and distros I am familiar with are way down. The only thing keeping most afloat, is that records are two or three times as expensive as they were a few years ago. It's a slippery slope. Many buyers who used to spend $50 and get a pile of new records now get two or three, and they are very selective due to the high cost. Labels insist on the most outrageous packaging to justify the inflated costs, driving the price up even more. I wish more labels would do a "diehard" collector edition and a normal edition to help even out the cost. But I guess for a lot of labels now, the vinyl is the "die hard" edition and there is not regular pressing as most people are streaming or downloading the music. It just pains me to see people pick up records with really good content and put them back on the rack every time because of the high price. Selling records like beer instead of champagne is a very dated '70s/'80s strategy as there are so many other ways to hear music now. But for stores and distros to survive, they need to be able to provide quality records at a price the customer is willing to pay. Stores survive off of turnover, not getting the maximum price possible for one particular record. Having a strong inventory of good quality records that are always selling is what keeps a store or distro going. Putting the quality records out of reach to all but the most diehard super fans further undermines the distribution model.

I refuse to admit, as many do, that the record store is a doomed model. I don't think many stores can survive selling new records, but as a clearinghouse for used records, lifestyle, culture and so on, the record store is still a very plausible concern. However, one thing we have noticed: the supply of used records has really started to dry up. We used to buy collections on a really regular basis, now few come in. The only people selling are lifers weeding out weak titles, meaning the used bins look kind of paltry. I am not sure if this means more people are selling on Discogs and ebay, or that the decline on the demand side has circled around to the supply side. That is to say, now that so many fewer people are buying records, and what they do buy is a handful of very expensive ones, there are fewer secondhand records coming back through the door a few years later.

For the last year, I have been really wrapped up in a big project: I sold my house and bought a new one which I have been rehabbing top to bottom. I haven't listened to a ton of new bands, and my collection has been in storage since last May. So when I got the *MRR* year-end top ten issue, I was intrigued to see a lot of bands I didn't know much about. So I carefully read the top tens and made a list and checked out a lot of them. I was a little taken aback that so many of them played droning post-punk, goth, and so on. In fact, I realized why I hadn't heard much about a lot of these bands: they just aren't playing hardcore. I did try to seek out records by some of the bands I did like, which was an interesting exercise. Almost every band in the *MRR* top ten had a soundcloud or bandcamp page and a few were even on Spotify. Many of the most interesting bands though had records that had gone in and out of print in a heartbeat, and were already selling on Discogs at inflated prices.

Remember, in the '80s a band used to put out a record and spend a *year* touring to promote it. Now I feel like new punk records fall into two categories: those with hype that sell out entire pressings to internet types in the blink of an eye, and those without hype that sit in distro bins for years collecting dust. The mid-range, good bands on solid labels with good distribution, seems to be rapidly eroding. Indeed, one of the quickest ways to kill the hype, is to make your records readily available. But these kind of records are what keep record stores afloat, something like a Black Flag *Damaged* or a Tragedy *Vengeance* that you can always stock, and will always sell. Keeping up with this hype machine, is something for a younger person than I. With my own distribution outfit, I have moved away from distributing new releases, into distributing reissues, because I am now warehousing thousands of records (mostly 7"s) by new bands that missed the hype parade.

I get several emails a day from bands looking for help distributing or releasing their records. There was a time when I was eager to help out. Nowadays, I just delete them all because I have seen how futile it is to try. I laud those distros that are still taking on tons of stock from new and unknown bands, but I can't throw more good money after bad until I clear out a few thousand records already gathering dust. The lack of interest in all but a handful of new releases just surprises me. Yet on the other side, you can't get a record pressed in less than four months because so many are being pressed. Once again I ask, who is buying all these records?

Lastly, I know I am not allowed to talk about other columnists, but some stuff in the reviews section?

1) That Clusterbombunit 7" is not a reissue.

They are the Last Band Standing, way ahead of their time as far as dis-core.

2) Not every band from Sweden playing hardcore is "D-Beat."

3) Soft Cell's *Non-Stop Erotic Cabaret* is a "definitive synth pop LP"? Synth, yes, but is this really even a Pop LP? Soft Cell always struck me as the darker, more twisted side of synth, without sliding into being goth or spooky. Depeche Mode's *Speak & Spell* might be a definitive synth pop LP—that shit is poppy—but elevating Soft Cell to that level? I am not so sure. I'm outta my comfort zone with this synth stuff so I am going to wrap this one up.

I'm back after missing a month for only the second time (I think) since I started this column in 2005. Had some pretty intense shit to deal with, but the worst of it seems to be over. And so we press onward...

THE AGE THING

I turned 55 in February. I joked that instead of taking out the AARP card, I was going to celebrate it by having a punk show. It was at the Cambridge Elks (aka Hardcore Stadium) with DROPDEAD, FUCK YOU PAY ME, STRANGER and my old band SHATTERED SILENCE. It was great fun. We got a good turnout and all the other bands played solid sets. Robert Williams from SIEGE sat in with DROPDEAD to play a few of his old band's songs. It was our band's first show in over 20 years and the first time I'd played with our bass player Christian since 1989. We recruited two new people—Ian on guitar and Jimmy on drums. Our original guitarist lives in New Hampshire and our original drummer couldn't do it. All four of us are over 40. Originally, we were supposed to do one show at the 15th anniversary party for Sonic Overload but I ended up adding us to this one and also played a basement show at the Boiler Room space in Boston. As it turns out, we didn't even play the anniversary show since one of the guys had an emergency. As of now, we have one more show planned before Christian moves out west. We'll probably play when he comes to visit but I don't want to be the only original member (already did that with a reunion show for NO SYSTEM, which was also fun) so there's going to be another hiatus. The shows went well and people of all ages seemed to be into it. I really don't want to take it any further than that, though. Some people might think it's pathetic or mid-life crisis fodder for us to have reunited but fuck 'em. It's not like we're cashing in on anything. And I've already talked to a few people about starting something new. I don't know if it'll happen or not, but it's a possibility.

At the birthday show, I made a point of mentioning that there were ten people who were over forty years of age playing the show and got a nice round of applause. I wasn't seeking validation, just making the point that anyone—young or old—who thought quote-unquote-older people shouldn't be involved in DIY punk or hardcore could go to hell. I didn't break into a rendition of "Young Til I Die" by 7 SECONDS because, as I've said before, I do find that song cheesy as hell.

I made that little speech (the only thing I said the whole set) for a couple of reasons. I was talking to an over-40 friend who's been involved in punk for a long time and he mentioned how he's heard people with the attitude that punk should be a youth rebellion and that older people into punk are (in his words) creepy perverts who like hanging around kids and are reliving their youth. That they think they deserve special privileges because they were around back in the day. These are people who express disdain at racism, sexism, and homophobia, but don't see a problem with age-ism.

I was also inspired to bring that up after getting into a pretty nasty pissing match with an old acquaintance on Facebook. Yeah, it's the internet, it's Facebook, it's not real life, but it's a conversation that could have happened off the internet just the same. And oh boy, did it get personal. I posted a story about a pretty well known rock performer who had played a university and the paper there leaked his rider and the amount he got paid. I said, in essence, what an asshole! Just blowing off steam—I mean, I don't know the guy personally so I probably shouldn't call him an asshole. I'm not into his music at all, mainly finding it overhyped, overrated garbage that mainstream rock critics gush over. Anyway, it turns out that said acquaintance is his publicist and took great offense at my admittedly gratuitous potshots. I did back off on the asshole comment.

I've known this guy since the '80s—not as a friend but, like I said, an acquaintance. He played in a couple of pretty well known bands and broke into the music biz as a label manager/publicist in the late '80s and has a successful publicity company with some pretty high profile clients. He always had his eye on a music business career and that's fine. It's just not for me. But even back then, he always tended to look down his nose at those who held to DIY ideals.

Anyway, he described his client as *"one of the last great guitar players still playing rock, creating all of his music on his own label with no input from outside label people or producers. He's a huge musician and not playing basement shows so you gotta tear him down I guess...Doesn't matter that he played basements and bowling alleys in the '90s."* He also bragged about being at the Grammy rehearsals, *"defending a real musician from a bunch of small town shit talkers who've done* nothing. *If I'm wrong, please disabuse me of my ignorance and tell me what great band you've played in, what impact you've had on music, or who cares about your band etc. etc."* Well, his guy did win a Grammy but the record was licensed to a major label so what he said isn't 100% true. And, whatever label it's on, it's still a crappy record—yes, I've heard it.

I mentioned how DIY continued to thrive, including in NYC, where he's based out of. He said, *"the NYC DIY scene can thrive all it wants and that's great, but I'm happy working with artists my age or older or at least in their 30s—rather than being the weird 50+ year old guy creeping out the kids at some DIY show."* Ouch! Damn right I took that personally, even though he admitted he was just being a dick because of what I'd said about his client—still, I'm sure he meant it.

I'm done with the self-indulgent navel-gazing and this shouldn't be taken as the ruminations of a bitter old man. I accept the fact that some will have a snotty attitude about older punks but not everyone's that way. Bottom line—ideally, age shouldn't matter. One of our songs goes, *"the youthful spark, it burns so bright/it flickers but it won't go out."* Damn, that's way cheesier than "Young Til I Die." It doesn't seem to always burn as brightly as it once did and I'm tired of a lot of the drama, cliques, etc., even more than in the past. I won't deny it—there's some second-guessing. I do feel the effects of aging a bit. But, like it or not, I'm not going anywhere.

Incidentally, I have an AARP card. Finally took the plunge last year. $16 a year and with a lot of good deals? No embarrassment about that, although I don't think it gets me any discounts from record distros. Damn...

PRINTED AND MUSICAL MATTER

I'm starting this segment with a book review—*Crate Digger: An Obsession With Punk Records* by Bob Suren. Before walking away from it a few years ago, Bob had dedicated most of his life to DIY punk, running a record store, distro, and label and playing in a number of bands.

Crate Digger is more than just your typical A to Z record guide, although that's the format. Some of the records are well known classics, some are more obscure. Some are records that Bob put out on his label Burrito. The book allows us to accompany Bob on his 30+ year punk rock journey. Instead of straight reviews, the entry for each record may tell a story about a place in time, the way he discovered the band, how he was able to coordinate putting out lost and forgotten recordings that he felt deserved to be heard. Often, the record at hand is only mentioned in passing, not even discussing the musical contents. The writing is sometimes choppy and abrupt but often poignant. He writes openly about the collapse of his marriage and other heartbreaking tribulations. There are also essays about different individuals he's

known during his life.

The anecdotal approach reminds us that, for the passionate music fan, there's a personal connection to a particular record that often conjures up various memories, both good and bad. When I hear side two of the CLASH's *Give 'Em Enough Rope*, it reminds me of my first date with Ellen in 1979. When I hear the AVENGERS' self-titled compilation, it reminds me of another romantic encounter. When I hear "5 O'Clock" by ARTICLES OF FAITH, I think about my shitty bank job. This book is for the person who always has a song playing in their head, who is happy to tell you at length why this record or that was important to them, what it means to them. That's what Bob is able to accomplish with *Crate Digger*. (Microcosm Publishing, microcosmpublishing.com)

Moving on to recorded matter, REALLY RED'S music has been unavailable for way too long and Alternative Tentacles has rectified that with a series of reissues—vinyl pressings of their debut album *Teaching You the Fear*, second LP *Rest In Pain*, and a collection of singles, EPs and unreleased material called *New Strings For Old Puppets* (named after their 1982 7" EP). All three of the records are also compiled onto a double CD collection. You'll hear this band or that referred to as underrated or underappreciated or what have you and it's true with these guys. REALLY RED were somewhat known beyond their hometown of Houston (their track "Prostitution" was on the *Let Them Eat Jellybeans* compilation) but, since their music has been unavailable for years, they sometimes get lost in the shuffle when talking about top-notch Texas bands from that period. REALLY RED didn't fit any set mold—they were a punk band at the core but in the same way that the MINUTEMEN or their Texas compatriots the DICKS and BIG BOYS were punk bands. There's an abundance of high-energy punk throughout but other influences seep in, from jazz to post-punk to psychedelia to something more melodic ("Nico"). It's music that's nervy and thorny, with a jarring instrumental interplay, but they could also get downright anthemic on a song like "I Refuse To Sing" and leadoff song from *Fear*, "Too Political," with its "NO MORE GHETTOS!" refrain. It's not all perfect—the cacophonous roar of "Star Mangled Banner" and the nearly 20-minute free-form sound collage "Just The Facts Ma'am" don't sound any much better now than they did in '85, when *Rest In Pain* was originally released. All in all, though, this is an indispensable collection, a band with its own style that still sounds riveting three decades later (PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141, alternativetentacles.com)

Another reissue comes from Florida band LOAD, *Drunken Warrior Chief*. This 12" is a collection of this '90s-era Miami band's output. The late Bobby Load spat out the vocals with a demented and unhinged cadence and the band's musical arsenal combined blistering hardcore with a nettled-sounding heaviness (some BLACK FLAG-inspired touches in there, as well). The speed-driven Pastor's Day" remains one of their best tracks, careening like an out-of-control firebomb. The download tacks on another dozen songs, including the wanton and manic "Palomino Steaks" and "595 A Lezzin." The lyrics can get dark as fuck, especially for the lurching, murderous "Pa's Moonshine." When people talk about '90s era hardcore, Load often seem to get unjustifiably overlooked and they stood apart from knucklehead metal core, youth crew silliness and angst-filled emo-core. (Rat Town, PO Box 50803, Jacksonville Beach, FL, 32240, rattownrecords.com)

SKEMÄTA dish out some pulverizing and punishing hardcore their self-titled 12": vocals that howl from the depths of pain and a thick sound working in some DIE KREUZEN-via-VOIVOD guitar inspiration to go along with the D-beat driven approach. The lyrical content has some of the DISCHARGE haiku going on and paints a bleak, doomsday scenario. Uneasy listening. (Sorry State, sorrystaterecords.com)

Finally, one of the best demos I've heard of late comes from G.L.O.S.S., hailing from Olympia, WA (and including a couple of transplanted Bostonians). The name is an acronym for GIRLS LIVING OUTSIDE SOCIETY'S SHIT, and it's an onslaught of in-your-face hardcore punk. The lyrics are equally in-your-face, screamed in your face, in fact, by Sadie who details the shit she deals with as a transgender woman. The overall sentiment for this band is made in resounding fashion on "Outcast Stomp," a call to arms for those who have been rejected due to sexual orientation, gender identity or any other "norm" that is forced on people and, frankly, they don't give a fuck about what anyone thinks. Due for a vinyl release soon. (girlslivingoutsidesocietysshit.bandcamp.com)

Al Quint, PO Box 43, Peabody, MA 01960, subvox82@gmail.com; subvox.blogspot.com; sonicoverload.net

You'll find many vocal microphones that are suitable for any stage use, ranging from the cheapest dynamic to the most expensive condenser. You might think that the more money you'll spend on a microphone, the better results you'll achieve, right? The why is lot of sound engineers' first choice for live settings a relatively inexpensive model like the Shure SM58. It's quite simple. Unlike studio microphones, where the "you get what you pay for" rule generally holds true, when it comes to mics for live performance there are several factors to bear in mind, other than simply optimum audio fidelity. Venues you might perform at will vary in size, temperature and acoustics. All of these factors will affect your ability to achieve a good vocal sound, and so compromises are made to ensure that the vocal gets across to the audience in the simplest and most direct way.

This often comes down to the most basic choices: a microphone that is rugged, straightforward in design, and inexpensive to replace should it get lost or stolen. As singers on stage often hold the mic in their hands, a less sensitive design that won't pick up handling noise and the movement of the singer is also an important consideration. You need to know that there are three main types of microphones, all sorted by the way they turn sound waves into electrical signals. They are commonly known as dynamic, condenser, and ribbon.

Dynamic: The dynamic microphone is the most basic type, and usually the least expensive, one of the reasons why it is often the most popular choice for singers on stage. Inside the mic is a small, thin plastic membrane or "diaphragm" which moves in response to audio waves. When the diaphragm moves back and forth, an attached coil moves within a magnetic field, which in turn generates an electrical current in the wire of the coil. Since the mass of the diaphragm and the voice coil is actually quite large compared to the energy that's contained in the acoustic signal, it takes time for the diaphragm to respond to the signal, restricting how fast it can move. For this reason, dynamic mics tend to respond poorly to high frequencies in comparison to other microphone types. However this is not usually too much of a problem with stage vocals, where detail of sound is not as important as in the studio. Its less sensitive design is also less prone to picking up handling noise. It also suits the need for reliability and ruggedness, as dynamics tend to be substantially more robust than other microphones types, and they have the added benefit of not requiring a source of electrical power.

Condenser: The heart of a condenser or "capacitor" microphone is a pair of metal plates placed in parallel to each other, spaced at a distance of about two hundredths of a millimeter. One plate is fixed, and the other is a diaphragm which is free to move in sympathy with incoming sound waves. When the spacing between the plates changes, the capacitance varies. If a polarizing voltage is placed across the capsule, a small electrical signal is then produced which describes the sound wave.

The electrical signal produced is much smaller than the one from a dynamic mic, which is why a built-in pre-amplifier is required to bring the signal up to normal microphone level. This should not be confused with external mic pre-amps, which are used to bring mic

level signals up to line level. Because of the built-in pre-amp, and also the requirement for a polarizing voltage, condenser mics need a source of electrical power, which normally comes in the form of "phantom" power, which is a back voltage supplied up the cable by the (external) mic pre-amp.

Although the condenser has an extended frequency response and should therefore generally sound better than a dynamic, it's not necessarily the best choice for singing on stage where the difference in quality may not be all that noticeable. Their extended frequency response can also make condensers more prone to feedback. A number of manufacturers do design condensers specifically for stage use though, and these typically have the ruggedness and handling capability of their dynamic counterparts. So for more intimate venues, and when the style of music is more suited to benefiting from the sound quality of a condenser, this might be the best microphone type for the job. Condensers are particularly flattering to more delicate vocals.

Ribbon: Ribbon mics are actually a special case of the dynamic mic. Rather than a coil attached to a separate diaphragm, they use a very thin metal ribbon as a diaphragm. This is suspended between two magnets, and its movement in sympathy with sound waves produces an electrical signal, in much the same way as a regular dynamic.

Even though they are loved for their warm sound, ribbon mics have a lot of disadvantages, and are generally not the first choice for a live microphone due to the fragile nature of the design. As they are less popular and fewer models of this type of design are available, the cost tends to be higher than an equivalent condenser or dynamic, and they are generally more fragile than a condenser. As such, they're not recommended for live use.

Not all microphones pick up sound the same way. Some are designed to respond primarily to sound approaching from a single direction, while others pick up sound from both the front and rear, but not from the sides. These directional characteristics are known as a microphone's "polar" or "pickup" pattern, and are an important consideration when choosing a vocal mic for stage. Together with the strategic placement of other band members and fold back speakers (also called monitors), the right polar pattern can substantially reduce "spill" and decrease the chances of feedback.

Here's a look at the most common microphone patterns:

Omnidirectional: The response of a mic that has an omnidirectional pickup pattern remains more or less constant regardless of where the sound is coming from. These mics tend to be the most technically accurate and natural, but they may well also pick up sounds not intended for them. In the studio, they are often used as ambient mics, and although they can be handy in live situations where there is little or no time to sound check, they tend to feedback and spill, which means that you'd rather use them only in the most controlled live environments.

Cardioid: The cardioid pickup pattern, sometimes also called "unidirectional," is so-named because its range of capture looks a lot like a heart shape. Cardioid mics pick up sound to varying degrees in front of the diaphragm, while rejecting sound from behind it. This type of pattern is usually created by the use of ports behind the capsule. The ports are acoustic paths or "labyrinths" for sound to reach the back of the diaphragm and effectively get lost, so that only the sound from directly in front of the diaphragm is captured. This type of pattern is ideal for a stage vocal mic as it will reject any of the surrounding sound, especially what is coming from PA or monitors, which, once picked up by the microphone, could result in a 'feedback' loop.

Whilst the cardioid is the most common of response patterns, it does suffer from the "proximity effect." Live singers, though, often use this to deliberate effect, as it adds an intimacy and accentuated warmth to the vocal sound when it is placed closer to the mouth, but can also reduce clarity and intelligibility. A common mistake of inexperienced stage singers is to clasp one or both hands around the lower part of the grille, blocking the "ports" referred to above, and temporarily turning the cardioid into an omni, often resulting in feedback.

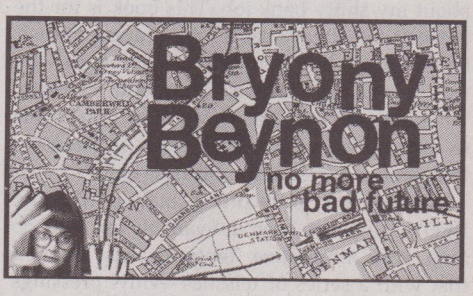
Super and hyper-cardioid: Super-cardioids have a good response from the front, but even less response than a regular cardioid to sounds arriving at the sides. Hyper-cardioids take this a stage further and also have a much narrower field of forward response. These types are very useful if there are other instruments either side of the vocalist that might be picked up by a vocal microphone with a less restrictive response, and they also tend to offer excellent feedback rejection. Beware though that they have a tight but significant "lobe" of response directly to the rear, which means that any monitors should be placed slightly to one side, rather than directly behind the mic.

How should I hold a stage microphone? One of the most common mistakes with regards to holding a microphone on stage is the two handed technique. This tends to cover up the ports on cardioid mics, making them more prone to feedback, as sound from the rear is no longer being rejected. The microphone is best held with one hand, with the lips almost touching the metal windscreen, or at least at a distance of no more than 6 inches (approx. 15 centimeters), and directly on axis to the front of the microphone. As compression is not often used in live situations, a singer with good technique will hold the microphone further away when they hit high notes that might otherwise come out much too loud.

instrumentsoneohone@gmail.com

ENDNOTES:

Your favorite team of Swedish people strike again. The PRICE OF SILENCE – "They Aim Not To Kill / Fear Of Scarcity" 7" out on D-Takt & Råpunk Records is really amazing. You should get your hands on a copy while it's still floating around.



This month I asked some questions of a DIY space a little closer to home. JT SOAR, named for the proprietor of its former usage as a fruit and vegetable warehouse, is in the center of Nottingham, somewhere nearly in the middle of England, and has become a mainstay for a ton of different styles of punk gigs, and is now firmly on the circuit for touring bands coming through the UK.

MRR: What was the venue sitch like in Nottingham prior to you opening the space?

Joe C: Up and down really. We suffer from being a mid-sized place, small city or large town vibes. This means we have one huge arena, a bunch of mid-level venues for 300 kinda cap and then tiny things, so if we wanted to put on a DIY gig that wasn't absolutely tiny in predicted turnout / the band needed good dosh we'd either have to work it into a function room (with all the problems of hiring inside a pub) or hire a "rock club" out which alienates half the bands.

Phil B: I'd say The Chameleon and Lee Rosie's have been fairly consistent in supporting independent promoters through the years, providing a place that doesn't fit your standard "pub" formula and catering for shows in the 30-80 attendee range. Art spaces such as One Thorsby Street and The Lurking Hole were also putting on shows every now and again. There were promoters such as Damn You that always managed to find interesting and appropriate places for larger shows (The Evens in the Sneinton Community Centre, Deerhoof in a Church in Carrington). Looking back on it I have very fond memories of the pre-JT Nottingham, discovering new spaces, bands and people. Even though some of them were quite fleeting (RIP Lurking Hole), the ideas we got from them were as influential as the ideas of what we wanted to avoid [that] we got from your standard boozer.

MRR: When did the idea for JT Soar come about—any other spaces you've been inspired by?

Phil B: The first spark was wanting to put a show on and realizing it was totally possible to do in the safe haven of JT. We put on the Real Numbers and the Hipshakes upstairs, it was unreal, the music was great, no pressures...a few months later when I took over the warehouse downstairs, there was nothing stopping us, the gigs never stopped. The Audacious Space in Sheffield has always been an inspiration to me, a real sense of collaboration and community.
Joe C: From the venue perspective of the space, which I co-organize with Phil amongst others, I was just jealous of all the times you speak to punks all over the world and the sentence "our venue" comes up. We had also been playing with our ill-fated post punk band La Boite Diabolique in some great spaces such as Wharf Chambers in Leeds. The punk run thing just makes everyone more relaxed and therefore the show objectively better.

MRR: What was the process like for actually securing space and what are the financial pressures?
Phil B: I initially moved my recording studio into a small room upstairs, subletting off a friend. How busy I got with recording seemed to perfectly balance out how quiet he got with rehearsals, so after a year I took the place on and have been building up both equipment and space for about five years now. There was a turning point when I took over the warehouse where a group of eight people who were either in bands or promoters came in on the rent with me to [use it] as a venue and rehearsal room. Until very recently JT has been subsidized by my work as a live sound engineer, but with the addition of new rehearsal rooms it's become self-sufficient allowing me to concentrate on recording and shows.

MRR: Who's involved on a day to day basis and how do you split tasks and make decisions? Consensus, benevolent dick-tator ship or both?
Joe C: There is a hierarchy based on what people can do/give to the space really. Phil's essentially the manager and is on site most the time whereas I'm not so I do a lot of promo and planning/admin stuff when I can remotely, as well as obviously putting on (mostly) good shows for foreign bands. There are also a few in house-ish promoters and folks who help with the practicalities and (actual) DIY. Shouts to the Hippy Dan and Longhair on that vibe. We don't sit down and have meetings and stuff as 1) we don't have time and 2) we'd possibly end up going off topic and wasting our precious sorting time. In general there are a lot of people who contribute what they can and that's the only way it would work.
Phil B: I generally deal with most of the recording, rehearsal and external promoter side of things, but in pretty much every avenue there's always someone helping out, Chris AKA Longhair is a big part of the studio side of things. Somehow JT has been filled with like-minded individuals, friends and very talented people I 100% trust and I think the whole place has kinda grown through input from everyone involved. I'm quite blunt and encourage folks to be too, it's made improving the place much easier.

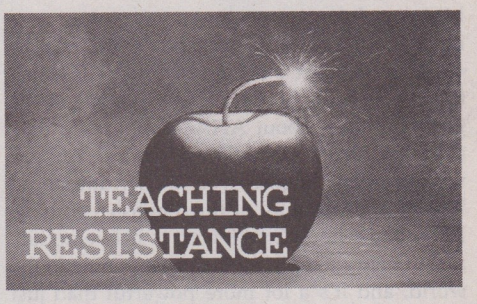
MRR: Best show so far?
Joe C: Been a few which stand out for me… GIVE (both times), Hysterics for the most surprisingly aggro performance, Birthmark (Nate Kinsella) for being stressed and nailing it from our perspective.
Phil B: That first Give show was incredible, there're still flowers all around JT from nearly three years ago *[laughs]*. Our first Halloween show was pretty special, Purple Pilgrims and Gary War, but most importantly loads of oddballs in the best costumes I have ever seen!

MRR: What part of town is the space in, and role if any do you think DIY spaces can play in gentrification?
Joe C: We're in the middle of this whirlwind right now and it's something that comes up a lot. The reason that we pick a rundown area like Sneinton Market to work from as punks is because it's cheap and empty. The reason these areas are prime for sweeping gentrification are slightly more…problematic. The kinds of businesses we passively help with passing trade are the ones that locals (bear in mind Sneinton Market is on the cusp two ex famous Nottingham "slums," to use a historic term) rely on. Now if any past experience of seeing this happen elsewhere is to go on, these places are the first to go once the boutique mini shops move in. This is problematic as fuck before you even factor in how landlords abuse re-branded districts. A recipe for disaster completely at odds with our loose overall politics....

MRR: Does anything happen there other than gigs?
Joe C: We just had our UN RECORD STORE DAY party, a completely unofficial event the day before Ebay Record Flipping day where we sold tons of awesome international DIY vinyl cheap!
Phil B: I'm pretty chuffed that under the roof of JT, along with the venue, we have rehearsal rooms, a recording studio, a well stocked distro and in a month or so, accomodation for travelling bands with shower facilities. The venue has become a catalyst for pretty much every other avenue of JT! Most of the bands I record have played here before: No Form, Fickle Twin, Soul Structure, the Wave Pictures, T-Shirt Weather, Ace Bushy Striptease, the Hipshakes, Human Hands etc....

MRR: What kind of lifespan do you see it having?
Phil B: Well, I've got another four years on my current contract, so..... let's see what the rent situation is in 2019...If it's become overinflated by the joys of a local STARBERKS and GRERRRGGS (UK Chain Bakery) then I guess we'll move a bit further out of town...If we go, we're taking the signs with us!
Joe C: We're kinda so integrated now I don't even know what would happen if we did go...one of the best thing I see is that a new generation of younger punks are growing up in the UK DIY venue boom, and if that's an essential element of punk to them it should keep on rolling.

If you're part of a DIY space or run shows from an unconventional space, especially if outside North America, I'd love to hear your thoughts on the above! Also, I put up five years worth of columns and interviews at bryonybeynon.com.



This month's Teaching Resistance is the second part of a two-part interview with ***Miriam Klein Stahl****, co-founder and lead teacher of Berkeley High's Arts and Humanities Academy (AHA), where she's taught since 1995. She is also an artist who specializes in printmaking, sculpture, paper-cut and public art and is internationally known among activist and punk circles for her powerful, iconic portraits of political activists, misfits, radicals and radical movements. As an educator, Miriam has dedicated her teaching practice to address equity through the lens of the arts.*

Miriam Klein Stahl has illustrated a new (April 2015) children's book with Kate Schatz, Rad American Women A-Z, *which uses a traditional format to introduce kids and adults to profiles of 26 inspirational and deeply radical women in public life. Miriam was interviewed over two separate lunch periods in her classroom at Berkeley High, where students were buzzing around the whole time working on art projects and occasionally interjecting with comments of their own—including a student whose comments start this month's column.*

Bella: I am Isabella DeVito Brown, I am a senior at AHA [Berkeley High's Arts and Humanities Academy, a "small school" program of a few hundred students among Berkeley High's 3000+ total students], and I've been here all four years. So, the thing about AHA is that we're a huge community and we are definitely taught to look at the world in different ways, and look past barriers—that's really important. Something that makes us different from the other schools is this interdisciplinary project that Ms. Stahl is talking about, and it's really good because a lot of schools separate this stuff around and in between classes, and with the IDP [Interdisciplinary Project] we are blending

together all of these important aspects of school and creating [something] that might help us look at the world in a different way.

It's really fun, actually. It's one of my favorite things about AHA because most other students have finals, and I'm like, yeah—I'm making this really awesome book and I'm learning all this stuff and it's not just learning about math or science. It's learning about how all these different things mix together to create something different.

MRR: Kind of makes it all make more sense.
Bella: Yeah, I think every school should do an IDP project. It really brings together the whole...
Miriam: ...Interconnectedness.
Bella: Yeah, it really does. It shows you how the world is not just black-and-white, it is really this whole mess of stuff, and that's one of the greatest things about AHA—that's what they show us, that's what they teach us. You are writing about English, you are writing about history and using all of this English you have learned in school. Creating art to help emotion, and to help exemplify what is happening in the world, and it's a lot more powerful than just writing an essay about it.

MRR: I just did my student teaching last semester here in the IB (International Baccalaureate) program, which is way more exam-focused for sure.
Bella: ...of course the people see that, and go "oh, those students are so prepared for the world", but really it is sort of a micro-vision of things. Like, "I know exactly what happened in history" but you can't connect that to everything else, which is [what's] great about [our project].

MRR: I think a lot of other schools may be emulating that model, but maybe not to the extent that this particular program has. So, Miriam, last week one of your students was asking about when it is okay to be biased when teaching about our culture or social inequalities in our culture, especially when you disapprove of these inequalities? If so, how can you still allow teens to be open-minded/have different perspectives?
Bella: We have a teacher who is sort of biased about stuff.

MRR: Well, everybody's got some bias, right? I mean, we all have our beliefs.
Bella: Well, the interesting thing is that she's biased on history, so her whole thing is that she shows us all the, like, minorities that were disregarded in history class, so you come out knowing so much more about the Harlem Renaissance, and I could talk about, like, African-Americans in this situation, whereas everyone else gets this sort of white-washed history.

MRR: I guess the question, which is from a student, is if you feel it is ok to be biased... really though, is there anybody who isn't biased, I guess that's the issue with the question, right?
Miriam: I don't think so. I think effective teachers aren't scared to bring in their life experience and who they are, and aren't afraid to be vulnerable in that way, bringing what you know and who you are, and being honest about how the world sees you. The students see us. They see a white woman who dresses like a boy, and I'm not going to pretend to be something that I'm not. I'm not going to hide that I'm living in the world in this very queer way, *and* that I have white skin privilege...And I think that you need to be honest about those things to be honest to students, to be real with students and present whatever it is you are presenting. Obviously, it's not relevant for everything you are doing, but I think it's bullshit when these teachers get up in front of a class and think that students don't see anything other than what they are delivering as the content.

MRR: The context is so important.
Miriam: Right, so we all have a bias, or a perspective we are coming from and I don't think there's anything wrong with that. Because hopefully in a student's day they are getting a diversity of perspectives anyway, because we all have our view on the world.

MRR: Right, and of course if you are just teaching the "standard view", that's a bias as well.
Miriam: Sure.

MRR: ...but I guess these are the questions that students think about, and when we step outside of our bubble other questions arise. A mutual acquaintance of ours has had struggles in [a nearby district] with regard to [their] identity as openly queer, and that created a lot of problems for [them]. So, I guess the context counts, too...where we are.
Miriam: Right, and in a lot of ways I am in a privileged place where I have not experienced homophobia in the classroom.

MRR: So, another student question here: When you teach kids to express themselves through art, is there ever a line not to cross in terms of offending people?
Miriam: There's always a line to cross. I think that line does get crossed in my classes, and it's always a good conversation to have. I think the thing they butt up against more is creating something and having an idea of how they want it to be seen, and having people see it in a way that was not intended, and so there's that thing that every artist struggles with. So, you use a swastika in an art piece, and you mean your piece to be anti-racist, is it going to come off as being racist or anti-racist? So, I think students straddle that line when they choose to make work that can have an emotional resonance with the audience. So, that's always a good conversation to have!

The other thing we have conversations about...What was that conversation we were having about the news, intent vs...
Passing Student: Impact.
Miriam: ...Intent vs. Impact. So, you know, even if you choose to put a naked woman in an art piece—which many people do, it's part of the art canon—what is the intent vs. the impact? Is that piece gonna come off as totally sexist or... not?

MRR: I guess this is an environment where kids can learn about how that goes. Which also leads into another excellent student question: How do you motivate a teen to create art with their own style? How do you help a teen discover their style? And I would add to that, how do you make it so they can express themselves in a way they can be happy or comfortable with?
Miriam: The only reason we started this small school was to address the equity gap, and so for me it is really important that students have really strong skills. So, freshman/sophomore/junior year, I focus 90% on building technique and skill, because I know that my students need to be better than most people, because they are judged a little harsher because of who they are in the world. So, I want them to have really strong skills and technique.

Then, in senior year, I focus more on conceptual work and developing ideas and style, and I don't think you can jump into that before you have skill and technique or it is just frustrating. So, the senior class, which is the AP class you were subbing in, is 100% student-focused where they are developing their skill and technique with their concept and their own personal style. It's a balance of keeping everyone on the same page, hammering in skills and technique, and then knowing when—as a teacher—to back off and let them develop their style and their concepts.

MRR: ...and if they always wanted to express it more raw-ly, they could always stop in at 924 Gilman for the weekend.
Miriam: *[laughs]* Sure. *[To group of students]* So, what do you all think makes AHA different from other schools?
Student 1: Teachers care.
Student 2: The teachers are much more...people who like each other. It's not just school, it is about how you build relationships, and here's how you think about the world, not just "do some problems," academics, it is about social skills. I think teenagers need a platform to figure it out. I think AHA has teachers that are not just teachers, they are friends and they care about you.

MRR: You have co-authored an awesome-looking new book with Kate Schatz coming out this year, titled *Rad American Women A-Z: Rebels, Trailblazers, and Visionaries who Shaped Our History . . . and Our Future*! How

did you come about collaborating with Kate Schatz?

Miriam: Kate is an author and a teacher at the Oakland School of the Arts; she teaches creative writing. I had submitted some images for a previous book project she had done called *Encyclopedia*, which was a collaboration between her and two other authors. They did a series of encyclopedias and then had authors and artists choose the word they wanted to illustrate or write about.

I did that project and she liked my work that I did for that, and so...Kate and I are both mothers of young kids. I have a seven-year-old, and she has a five-year-old and a one-and-a-half-year-old, and so when she had her daughter, who's five, she had an idea to do a children's book. There's a need right now for diverse children's books. There's a hashtag you may be aware of right now called #weneeddiversebooks. She had an idea, like "I want to make a book for my daughter has rad women in it," strong, powerful, feminist women.

[Kate is] part of this book called Binders on Facebook, it's all these women writers. The name came out of that thing from when Mitt Romney was running for President where he said "I have binders of women"... and so she kind of put the call out onto there. "Hey, if I did a women A to Z book, what women should be included?" It kind of started there and she sat with the idea for two years, and then called me and we had coffee and talked about collaborating on it.

So she asked, "do you want to do this book?", and I tend to say yes, so I said yes. And I had already made paper cuts of five of the women that were on her initial list.

MRR: Who were some of the specific ones that really grabbed you, that you were super stoked on?

Miriam: Well, she had an initial list and then we worked on that list together, and that's where our collaboration started. We were in pretty much agreement about most everything besides one—she wanted Sonia Sotomayor for S and I wanted Sister Karita, this radical nun [*also a major silkscreen artist/innovat-ed.*]. So that was our only disagreement...I was mad at Sonia Sotomayor, it was during that Hobby Lobby stuff last summer, and she wasn't saying anything [about it]. I also wanted to kick Patti Smith out at one point, when she decided to play the Pope's Christmas party.

MRR: At least she hasn't gone full-Exene Cervenka yet.

Miriam: *[laughs]* Aw, man. I just started making paper cuts for the people on the list, and I tend to work really fast so I think I made about 20 of them in a week. It was summer *[laughs]*. We got together A thru E in a week, and she did the writing for those. I had known Michelle Tea for a really long time, who does Sister Spit and Radar Productions, so I emailed Michelle A thru E with the images and some of the writing, and was like "Hey! Wanna put out a children's book?"...Kate and I were busy and didn't have time to do a kickstarter thing, and I'm not really interested in doing that. I see the value of those projects, but my ideal was to work with a local publisher with a feminist perspective. But, you know, Sister Spit is known more for queer debauchery and not children's books, so I wasn't quite sure. I didn't hear back from her for a couple weeks, then all of a sudden I got an email from her, which was like, "I just saw your email, yes, I wanna do the book!" Right after that we had a meeting with City Lights and they were like, "Yeah, we wanna do your book", and I had all the images so I brought them in a portfolio and they totally loved them, and then Kate wrote the book over the summer...

MRR: That came together fast! It almost seems like it could be a shelf reference, or even assigned for classes.

Miriam: Well, we are both teachers so we have reached out to teachers to write lesson plans for it in trade for a free book...wanna make one? I'll give you a book and some posters.

MRR: I'd love to!

Miriam: Yeah, we don't have many middle school or high school lesson plans yet. My kid's at Malcolm X in the second grade, and her teacher's doing a whole project with it for International Women's Day, or Women's Month, or whatever. So, for the month, her class is researching their own rad women and doing drawings, and are gonna make their own book, which is really great.

MRR: Are you going to have the lesson plans online?

Miriam: We have radamericanwomen.com and that's meant to be a resource, there will be lesson plans online, etc. The book will be available at many independent bookstores, I always tell people to order direct from City Lights and avoid Amazon. It's a really fun kid's book. Me and my daughter, the seven-year old, have been picking one a night, she'll pick a letter and we will read it. She's going to read at some of the local readings. She likes X... the unknown woman. All the women who do things and don't get acknowledged

[bell sounds, everybody scrambles]

The Teaching Resistance column is designed to provide a platform for radical, subversive teachers/educators to share their ideas and draw attention to important issues around education. If you are a teacher (anywhere in the world) for students of primary or secondary school ages (K-12), Community Colleges, or alternative learning arrangements such as collectivist free schools, and you want to submit an idea for a column, please write to teachingresistance@gmail.com.

"The action we take is not our own.

It's fed on us, in our 'omes.
The TV is on, your parents are in bed,
I'm out on'a street and I wish you were dead.
Now I'm alive. I'm in the pub.
Couple'a pints, I wanna smash it up.
I'm jus' looking for the time to kill,
'Ello bird, are you on the pill?
All this song is sung in rhyme,
Like my life, I'm killing time.
Looking for a prophet to follow or kill,
I don't fink my life is going uphill."

— "The Best Years of our Lives," BARNEY RUBBLE

O Make Way for the Wise Men!

Run amuck, don't give a fuck! Skinhead! Winter is beat, and the Gang is up and about. Like these fucking daffodils outside my window, the Gang is in full bloom. I'm on the block and ready to rock.

Go! First things first! I just heard the demo from Olympia/Seattle's BRICKLAYER. I guess it came out in November or December of 2014 but it just came in my ears a couple days ago. Sometimes I'm waaaaay outta the loop. I get sidetracked with life and work. And for a couple weeks I got stuck in a cycle listening to last year's RYKER'S record, *Hard to the Core* and HATEBREED's, *Satisfaction Is the Death Of Desire*. I don't know. I think I was compensating 'cuz a grown-ass woman called me a girl for smoking Newports. Don't box me in lady-bro. Anyway. BRICKLAYER is siiiick! I lived in Olympia during the reign of SEX VID and BRICKLAYER brings back some of those feels. Maybe only in attitude though. Both are frenetic hardcore but BRICKLAYER wear their boots on their sleeves, if you know what I mean. Sometimes I think this is the new sound of the brickwall. But whatevs. This shit is good. This was also apparently covered on the "New Blood" section of the *MRR* website. My bad. Better late than never. On to the next one!

SWEET FUCK ALL is a band from Philly. I know nothing about them. One of our research goons found their demo on bandcamp (sweetfaphilly.bandcamp.com). And dang! What a find! The tunes that blasted forth from the Acer almost shut it down! This band sounds like they got left off *The Spirit of Oi! American Style*. Five songs of classic sounding East Coast US of Oi! Immediately you can hear PATRIOT and FORCED REALITY influences. Mainly PATRIOT in the vocals, plus there's also a bit of BELTONES rock'n'roll that adds to the appeal. Lyrics are top notch as well. From the song, "Melting Pot: "Stars and stripes / the flag we fly / when we wear it we're filled with

pride / stars and stripes fly the flag / American skinhead pride! Pride in our culture / respect all others / I know I wouldn't be an American skin / without understanding the melting pot we're in!" Apparently this was just recorded a few weeks ago (mid-March), and hopefully when this mag hits your hands you will be able to track down a tape. But for now, if you have the ability, you can get these five tunes for free. "Now I can clearly see, 'cuz I got the 1000 yard stare!" Oi!

Melbournian skinheads RAZORCUT have a new record out, *Rise Again*. Rebellion Records (rebellionshop.com) is putting out the CD while the LP is a joint venture between Rebellion and Longshot Music (you gotta go thru Pirate's Press distro so...piratespressrecords.com). This fukkin record is putting other shit we've been listening to at HQ to shame. Granted, it's the PROGRESS, RHIANNA (what*ever*!) and *Dude Ranch*, but the point stands. This LP is tough and mature and is another nail in the coffin of the idea that Oi! is basic or "thick". By the way, CHUMBAWUMBA/SKIN DISEASE still have a bounty on their heads. Like Pearl Harbor, we never forget. Anyway, *Rise Again* starts off with the anthem/theme song, "Razorcut." Peep this: "The new breed has arrived! / A show of strength and a show of pride / Coming at you with the sound of the street / With all the subtlety of a kick in the teeth!" Al White (who also sings in MARCHING ORDERS) has one of the best voices in Oi!/streetpunk these days and he doesn't fail on this, RAZORCUT's first full-length. Backup vocals by the two sheilas in the band, Doz and Bel, add much appreciated harmony to an already stellar sound.

I called this record mature. I don't mean soft. I mean it's not driven by songs of fuck-up alcoholism that much of Oi! is stuck in. Take the song "At the Bar Tonight": "Once was a kid, so invincible / Had a million lives unpredictable / Such a troubled kid without sense of himself / No identity, followed everyone else / Last one standing at the bar tonight? Some things will never change..." The reasons I became a skinhead are not the same reasons I've stayed a skinhead. Make sense? If you like Aussie Oi! you prolly already got this. If you want to expand your "acceptable Oi!" list past BISHOPS GREEN and your worn out copy of *Voice of a Generation*, check out RAZORCUT.

What else is new? I got the new RUDE PRIDE record, *Be True to Yourself* (rudepride.bandcamp.com). I think it needs to grow on me. It's real...Happy? Like the CLASH playing Oi!? Big bouncy bass lines. Most songs have a tempo change at about the 2/3rd mark. There is piano in a couple songs...which is cool. These dudes really know how to write a catchy song. Not so much in the VANILLA MUFFINS way, but in the pop-country kinda way. I bet this record would be good on a long road trip, or useful to trick your mom into thinking that not all skins are Nazis. And these dudes are seriously *not* Nazis. So if that's something you want made clear in your Oi! than you'd probably like this. They even talk about burning their country's flag. And since they are from Madrid, I have no opinion on that. But I bet their *abuelos* do.

RECONQUESTA from Barcelona, Spain finally put out their full length, *Recupera el que et Pertany* (Disco Nightmare, reconquesta.bandcamp.com). We can't get enough! I wish I spoke Catalan, so I could understand the obviously powerful lyrics. The music is slightly metallic up-tempo steel-toe oi! No politics, just twelve songs of Catalan patriotism. For fans of SECTION 5, CONDEMNED 84 (esp. *Storming to Power* era), GLORY BOYS, ULTIMO ASALTO, RAZORBLADE. Oi! per Catalunya!

"To our brothers and our sisters of the clockwork crew! / This life I lead never has dull moments / Full of rage, anger, enemies and opponents / This life I lead is hard going and rough / But we will never back down we're proud, strong and tough!" That's how SEASIDE REBELS kick off their song, "Wrong or Right" from their debut EP, *Changing Times*. Pretty fucking right on. Contra Records and Longshot Music, can't help but back the winners. You get four tracks of infectious, yet serious streetpunk'n'oi! on this lil slab of resinous vinyl. Limited to 500 copies, this'll sell out nowish? Shit, the last song, "Shadows of the Past" might give NOI!SE a run for catchiest tune of 2015. Killer record.

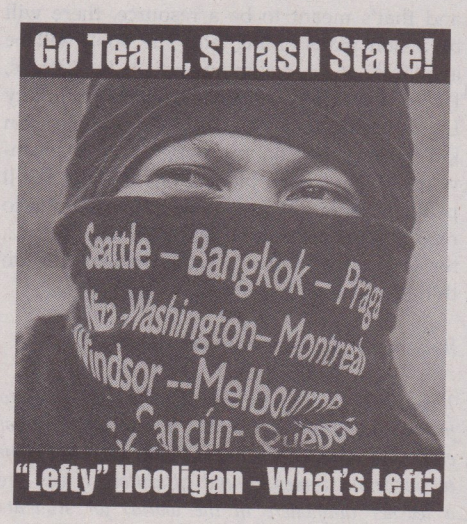
That's all. We're outta here!

ENDNOTES:

1) Kenny Kaos has the best taste in this magazine.

2) I need someone to explain GANG OF FOUR to me. I don't get it.

3) Lion Heart Records (lionheartrecords.bigcartel.com) finally shipped me my copy of that RANGAISTUSPUTKU 7". Thanx!



In 35 years in leftist politics, I have met many ex-Stalinists and Maoists who became Trotskyists and council communists; I have never met anyone who went in the opposite direction. Once you have played grand master chess, you rarely go back to checkers.

Loren Goldner, "Didn't See The Same Movie" Hooligan Rule #3: The purer the anarchism in theory, the less effective in practice.

Okay, I'll admit it. I tend to regularly take the piss out of anarchism when I write about it. I spent one column making fun of anarchist goofiness in being simultaneously uncritically inclusive and hypercritically sectarian. Then, after taking on and failing at the Sisyphean task of defining the locus of historical agency, I concluded by proclaiming anarchism a historical failure utterly lacking in agency. And just last column, I made snide comments about the anarcho/ultra milieu's tendency to push purity over pragmatism with regard to current events in Greece and Kurdistan. Far as I'm concerned, most anarchists are still playing tiddlywinks.

It's too easy to make fun of anarchism. And while I'm not about to stop, I do want to develop a useful metric for the effectiveness of anarchism. Hence, the above rule of thumb. Here, it's worth requoting the relevant passages by Max Boot from his book *Invisible Armies*:

Anarchists did not defeat anyone. By the late 1930s their movements had been all but extinguished. In the more democratic states, better policing allowed terrorists to be arrested while more liberal labor laws made it possible for workers to peacefully redress their grievances through unions. In the Soviet Union, Fascist Italy, and Nazi Germany, anarchists were repressed with brute force. The biggest challenge was posed by Nestor Makhno's fifteen thousand anarchist guerrillas in Ukraine during the Russian Civil War, but they were finally "liquidated" by the Red Army in 1921. In Spain anarchists were targeted both by Franco's Fascists and by their Marxists "comrades" during the 1936-39 civil war—as brilliantly and bitterly recounted by George Orwell in Homage to Catalonia. Everywhere anarchists were pushed into irrelevance by Moscow's successful drive to establish communism as the dominant doctrine of the left. [...] Based on their record as of 2012, Islamist groups were considerably more successful in seizing power than the anarchists but considerably less successful than the liberal nationalists of the nineteenth century or the communists of the twentieth century. ("Bomb Throwers: Propaganda by the Deed" and "God's Killers: Down and Out?")

To the utter defeat of anarchism in Ukraine (1918-21) and Spain (1936-39) must be added the failure of anarchism in the Mexican revolution (1910-20). Of these three major revolutions explicitly inspired by anarchism, or having substantial anarchist participation, none went beyond the stage of anarchist revolution into creating a long term anarchist society. All three were defeated militarily during the civil wars that followed the start of each revolution, with Ukraine's Makhnovshchina liquidated by the Bolsheviks, Spanish anarchism undermined by Leninists, socialists and liberals before being eliminated by Franco's fascists, and Mexico's original Zapatistas crushed by the socialist/corporatist precursors to the PRI. That's 0 for 3, out of the three most heavyweight revolutions of the twentieth century. But we're not keeping sports scores here. We're talking about history

and tens of thousands of lives lost and societies dramatically altered. Again, it's absurd to prevaricate by contending that anarchism is only a failure *to date*. That anarchism's time is still to come. If anarchism cannot manage to establish itself despite having the solid majority of the working classes as well as a popular revolutionary upsurge behind it, it's time to admit the most severe conclusion of my rule of thumb. Anarchism in its purest, most historically pertinent form has been a complete washout.

Which is too bad because the daily practice, organizational forms, and valiant struggles displayed in explicit anarchist revolutions have been truly inspiring. What's more, most of the pivotal revolutionary moments in history have been, at the very least, implicitly anarchist and, together with their explicit siblings, constitute the category of social revolution. Such revolutionary uprisings are broad based, popular, spontaneous, organized from the bottom up, intent on overthrowing existing class and power relations, but invariably short-lived. Social revolutions have been myriad, some flash-in-the-pan and others persistent, but only an abbreviated list can be provided here. (The Paris Commune, 1871; Russia, 1905; Mexico, 1910-19; Russia, 1917-21; Ukraine, 1918-21; Germany, 1918-19, Bavaria, 1918-19; Northern Italy, 1918-21; Kronstadt, 1921; Shanghai, 1927; Spain, 1936-39; Germany, 1953; Hungary 1956; Shanghai, 1967; France, 1968; Czechoslovakia, 1968; Poland, 1970-71; Portugal, 1974; Angola, 1974; Poland, 1980-81; Argentina, 2001-02; etc.) Let's spend a bit more time further delineating types of revolutions.

The initial February 1917 revolution was nothing less than a spontaneous mass uprising of the majority of workers and peasants across the Russian empire which overthrew the Czarist *ancien regime*. Inspired by Western European liberalism, the February revolution was not of any single political persuasion. Popular self-activity and self-organization from the base up characterized Russian revolutionary society at that time. This was not just a matter of dual power—where the formal liberal Kerensky government paralleled an antagonistic, informal socialist government of the soviets—but one of a multi-valent revolutionary situation where power resided on numerous levels—like the factory committees—and eventually in various regions—like the Makhnovist controlled Ukraine and the SR-dominated Tambov region. When the Bolshevik organized Red Guard overthrew Kerensky's government and disbanded the multi-party Constituent Assembly in what has been termed the October Revolution, Russia's social revolution waned and the civil war began in earnest.

Many considered this vanguard political revolution a Bolshevik *coup de etat*. The Bolsheviks called it a socialist revolution. And make no mistake, socialist revolutions leading to Leninist states have been rather successful as revolutions go, far more successful than social revolutions. Explicitly anarchist social revolutions have never succeeded, as I keep repeating. Implicitly anarchist social revolutions have enjoyed a little more success as they are several degrees removed from libertarian purity. The German 1918-19 revolution and civil war brought about the liberal democratic Weimar Republic by default. France May-June 1968 changed an entire generation, especially in Europe, leading to political defeat but cultural victory. And the social unrest in Poland from 1980 through 1989 spearheaded by the Solidarity trade union movement arguably helped bring down the Warsaw Pact and paved the way for Western-style liberal democracy in Communist Poland, even as Solidarity itself was sidelined.

Now consider a couple of variations on my Hooligan rule.

What about a practice that tends toward the anarchistic, promulgated from a decidedly Marxist-Leninist theory? Last column I discussed the situation of Rojava in Syrian Kurdistan now, and of Chiapas in Mexico for the past twenty years. In the former, the stridently Leninist PKK/HPG-PYG/YPG have adopted anarchistic communalism and democratic confederalism around which to organize Kurdistan society in liberated territories. In the latter, the post-Maoist EZLN has translated Mayan democratic traditions into "mandar obedeciendo," the notion of commanding by obeying, which conflates nicely with Mao's own dictum to "go to the people, learn from the people." The EZLN further praises Mayan communalism and mutual aid, yet it also fetishizes *indigenismo* while ignoring capitalist property and social relations and remaining a full-blown, hierarchically organized army. Despite such profound contradictions the EZLN was touted as anti-authoritarian and libertarian by anarchists and left communists the world over when they first emerged from the jungles of Chiapas in 1994. Rojava received a far more critical reception from the left of the Left when it emerged out of the Syrian civil war in 2014. That's because of the PKK *et al*'s tortuous authoritarian history and orthodox Leninist party/military structure, which puts the accent on nationalism in national liberation struggles and in no way challenges capitalism, even as it pays lip service to Bookchin's libertarian municipalism and calls for the decentralized cantonization of any future Kurdistan. Further, the EZLN's Chiapas is far more media savvy and social democratic, even liberal, as compared to the PKK's Rojava. Rather than a variation on my rule then, this is the case of a strict Leninist core practice and rigorous hierarchical political/military command structures allowing for some libertarian wiggle room in the greater society in question.

But what about the idea that aboriginal hunter-gatherer societies, if not tacitly anarchist, were plainly anarchic? "According to this myth, prior to the advent of civilization no one ever had to work, people just plucked their food from the trees and popped it into their mouths and spent the rest of their time playing ring-around-the-rosie with the flower children. Men and women were equal, there was no disease, no competition, no racism, sexism or homophobia, people lived in harmony with the animals and all was love, sharing and cooperation." So writes the so-called unibomber Ted Kaczynski in his essay "The Truth About Primitive Life: A Critique of Anarchoprimitivism." Kaczynski then cogently demolishes this myth point by point using anarcho-primitivist and classical anthropological sources. Primitive societies were not examples of anarchism so much as they were of anarchy. The radical decentralization and technological simplicity of aboriginal societies allowed the evils of hierarchy, warfare, competition—if and when they arose—to be contained by scaling them down until they did minimal damage. A primitive tribe might very well be peaceful, communal, and egalitarian, but if not, the fact that a warlike, competitive, hierarchical aboriginal tribe was relatively small and confined to a compact territory meant that any harm done by them would be severely limited. The anarchy of paleolithic hunter-gatherer societies was not conscious anarchism by any stretch of the imagination. As such, something as simple as the proliferation of agriculture which ushered in the neolithic age rapidly subverted paleolithic anarchy by allowing agricultural surpluses to accumulate, upon which state structures and class societies were then eventually organized.

Now, a note on left communism. Left communism can be viewed as political accretion based on a progressive sloughing off from the Leninist Left. First there was the contentious political relationship between Rosa Luxemburg and Lenin, followed by the disaffection of Trotsky and Bukharin on the left in the Bolshevik party. Various Left fractions in the Bolshevik party attempted reform from within, most significantly Sapronov's Democratic Centralists, Kollontai's Workers Opposition, and Miasnikov's Workers Group. Finally, leftist tendencies congealed against the Bolsheviks in the Third International, on the one hand the council communism of the Dutch and German Left as represented by Pannekoek, Ruhle, and Gorter and on the other hand Bordiga's ultra-party communism on the Italian Left. Social revolutions are *sine qua non* for left communists, which laud them in principle while often being highly critical of specific instances. The need to shorten, if not entirely eliminate the transition to true communism, is the objective of much of left communism.

Between the first and second World Wars, mass movements of workers and peasants were dominated primarily by Marxism and Leninism, and secondarily by various types of anarchism. Left communism ran a distant third, without much of a mass base to speak of. Yet anarchists and left communists frequently found themselves allied against social democrats and Leninists, and for unfettered social revolution. The POUM's alliance on the barricades with the

CNT/FAI during the 1937 Barcelona May Days during the Spanish civil war, as well as the anarchist/left communist blend exemplified by the Friends of Durruti, clearly made them political bedfellows. This affiliation continued with the roller coaster fall-and-rise of anarchist and left communist political fortunes from 1945 on, and today I talk about the anarcho/ultra anti-authoritarian milieu as an overarching category. Of course, there are differences. We'll leave a discussion of that for a future column.

As for Hooligan Rules #1 and #2? Those too require more space than I have at the moment. Did you hear the one about the anarchist, the Marxist, and the rabbi who walk into a bar? The bartender says: "What is this, a joke?"

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, End Time, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called Fim in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I'm archiving past columns, and publishing current ones a month delayed on my blog, www.leftyhooligan.wordpress.com. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@me.com.

i don't think that i need to sit here with you fucking dildos any more

by Imogen Binnie

1. I was in a nonmonogamous queer relationship when I was fourteen.

I wouldn't have called it that at the time. When I was fourteen I went to this thing called Nerd Camp which we found out years later was a social experiment to see what happened when you removed normal kids so that nerds could develop socially without predators. What happened was that we made out with each other and taught each other the thing where you fill a glass of soda most of the way, pour a half-centimeter thick floating layer of pepper on top, then pour more and more salt onto the pepper until it sinks through, reacts with the carbonation in the soda beneath it, explodes like a fucking volcano and makes a mess everywhere, then you walk away without even thinking about the privilege that enables you not to give a single thought to who will have to clean up your gross mess, dyed our hair with Kool-Aid, and listened to a lot of They Might Be Giants.

(I never really liked They Might Be Giants. I know now that this was because deep inside my crystal heart I have always been a gold star hesher, but at the time I felt pretty insecure about not really *getting* They Might Be Giants. Like there was something wrong with me.)

What happened was, I was still ostensibly a boy at this point, although I'd grown my hair out pretty long and felt Significant Summer Gender Feelings about the fact that the moment I got to camp that year I started parting it in the middle. Whatever. I started making out with this girl, and then this boy who I already had a silent BUFU crush on wanted to be dating her, too, so he was like "let's just have a three-way relationship." I don't think he really wanted to be dating me but the idea of a three-way relationship was the coolest thing I'd ever heard of and also I had all this nascent queerness desperate for an outlet which I wouldn't have to confront or process or acknowledge. So it was perfect.

The three of us spent the next three weeks making out whenever we weren't in class—like literally learning etymology instead of going outside—or practicing for the talent show band Action Kato that he and I were in together, which was named after a Wolverine action figure I'd found somewhere and taped a picture of Kato Kaelin's face to, creating my own Kato Kaelin action figure. It was awesome.

2. I'm pretty sure the first time I ever saw an issue of MRR it belonged to this girl who I had a different desperate BUFU relationship with, a couple years later but still in high school.

I don't remember which one it was. It doesn't matter. We used to play "Hold Your Ground" and "Song #1" and stuff like that in her basement with her brothers and a rotating crew of punkers experimenting with heroin and surf music and sneaking entire bottles of vodka into Coney Island High then passing out under barstools while ska bands played.

(I feel like I'm self-mythologizing a little. I want you to know that I wasn't cool and I certainly wasn't much of a punk at this point. My favorite bands were, like, the Flaming Lips. And Tori Amos.)

Anyway I used to wear her clothes sometimes. We'd go to Rocky Horror with the other high school weirdos and I'd wear her latex skirts or red nylon slips and act like it wasn't the biggest fucking deal in the world to me. You know. Some Saturdays we'd take a walk to Zipperhead. I was super into her but she had a boyfriend so we just talked on the phone a lot and, like, staged a coup at our high school's literary magazine and smoked cigarettes in cars. I have this really clear memory of her wanting to do a thing where we took turns trying to express something on guitar—something simple, like happiness or sadness or anxiety—and I was so sixteen and insecure, freaked out by the idea of doing anything unironically so all I tried to play was "Godzilla destroying Tokyo" like an asshole. That is not even a feeling! Imagine how rad I'd be at playing guitars now if I'd actually risked sucking in order to get better. Instead though all I can play is sludge metal.

On bass.

The first time I took acid it was with her and her brothers, and their mom came home right in the middle and, like, made us dinner that we couldn't eat, then got us to untangle Christmas lights. Untangling Christmas lights on acid sucks. I think her mom must have known we were on acid and gave us that job just to fuck with us.

Anyway she ended up breaking up with her boyfriend and going away to college. Eventually we made out and soon afterward we fell out of touch. At some point she moved to New York. At some point so did I. We didn't really see each other there.

3. My friend Paige still makes fun of my old band Strictly Platonic. I'm not trying to be mean, but we were not very good. Basically what happened was that Romeo hadn't been into punk—had, in fact, been a rapper—until he heard the AFI stuff from when they were turning goth. He thought it was the coolest thing he'd ever heard so he got us to start a goth-punk band with him. But I was a self-conscious mess because I'd just come out as trans, our drummer Linda didn't really know what she was doing, Romeo used to write Myspace updates to our fans—who he addressed as the Fallen Ones—and I don't know if Linda's best friend Moise, who was in the band as The Backup Singer, ever actually got a copy of the lyrics. I did get to put a lot of fake blood on my face and wear thrift store prom dresses while I jumped off bass drums and amplifiers or rolled around on the ground, though. Y'know. That old performance of punk rock recklessness, as stylized as an ancient Greek tragedy mask.

In retrospect it was pretty bad but at the time it ruled, especially since being onstage with that band was an excuse for me to Explore Gender or whatever, meaning specifically to wear dresses that I didn't have an excuse to wear anywhere else. (This is the only reason I'm still involved with punk.) (Well, and also the money.) It would take a lot more space than this to tell you what it was like to transition as a broke white girl in New York City in the Myspace era but trust me that I felt like I was cool as hell even though I was always desperately stressed and mostly all I did was drink forties in my room and cry.

Listen: here is why I'm bringing up Strictly Platonic. On June 6th, 2006, the Bouncing Souls released their sixth album, and they celebrated it with six shows in six nights at the Knitting Factory. We went to every single one of them. Or maybe we didn't all go; I know I was at all of them, and I think John probably was too; other members of Strictly Platonic came to some of them, but listen: surprise.

This whole column has been about the Bouncing Souls the whole time.

4. Despite all the music journalism shittalk, we all know that the bands we like reflect the selves we are and the selves we'd like to be

more than they reflect, like, anything objective about the actual music. We like a band because we like their aesthetic, the way they sound, or the way their shirts look or whatever. Which is why it's funny that I love the Bouncing Souls so much. They're a sore thumb in my grown-up punk, I-look-like-a-taller-version-of-a-bad-picture-of-my-mom-except-with faded-out green-hair-and-stupid-tattoos, all-shrieking-and-blastbeats-all-the-time lifestyle. But what you need to understand is that I'm writing this in April, when the winter should be ending. But it's not. It's snowing in the middle of fucking April and I feel like my heart is a hunk of amethyst deep in the ground, frozen with the dirt, unable to feel anything and likely to shatter if I try to dig it up.

So I've been listening to the Bouncing Souls.

That boy I made out with in high school? He made me a list of bands that I should know about, with a special section for bands from New Jersey. I don't remember a single other band on that list, except for Weston, who I don't think I ever actually listened to. Around that time I saw somebody wearing the Souls t-shirt that was just the poster from *Pretty In Pink* except instead of *Pretty In Pink* it said The Bouncing Souls and that sealed it for me. I bought the first album. I came for "I Like Your Mom" and "These Are The Quotes From Our Favorite '80s Movies" (the first cool thing I ever learned to play on a bass) and "Candy," but I've stuck around for a hundred years for "Old School" and "The Guest" and, like, every other song on there. And then "The Freaks Nerds & Romantics," "Lamar Vannoy" and "The Ballad of Johnny X," and then "Kid" and "Kate Is Great." And so on.

That girl I used to be in love with in high school? I have this really clear memory of her telling me about buying the first Bouncing Souls CD and when she opened it, she thought there was a big MTV logo on the CD itself, so she threw it across the room. (There was also a circle with a line through it. It was a Fuck MTV picture. I can see how she missed it though.) We totally played Souls songs in her basement.

It is a fucking Jersey thing, dude. My brother got married a couple years ago and his best man's entire speech was about how much he and my brother liked the Bouncing Souls and nobody else ever liked the Bouncing Souls as much as them...until my brother met his wife-to-be.

I'm thinking about the Bouncing Souls because I've been feeling like I barely have a heart any more and they have so many songs that make me have feelings! "Righteous anger" and "air drums" and "disappointment" and "blastbeat" and "yelling along phonetically with Italian screamo" are all pretty safe emotional places for me to be, but every Bouncing Souls song is about how "Hey, I'm fuckin' trying over here" and "friends are important" and "I miss you" and "I guess I fucked up but I am determined to learn from it" and "growing up" which when you write 'em out I guess are all kinda standard pop punk subjects and I wouldn't care if some band I didn't already have a tattoo of was singing about them. But these are the songs from my life! And also? There is a song on their most recent album about knowing that a comet is coming to destroy the earth and we're all going to die and "I can't wait to see what it's like to be weightless." That fucking rules! Maybe I have even written about this here—there is a very real possibility that I write a column about how much I like the Bouncing Souls every April, but I'm not going to check. I don't care! I put that needle on the record, play that song again, and it makes me feel kind of like a human being.

Fuckin' whatever, man, I don't give a fuck all I want to say is:

THANKS FOR THE MUSIC IN OUR LIVES
FORGIVE OURSELVES FOR ALL THOSE LIES
SEND SOME LOVE TO ALL THE LONELY
DON'T FORGET WE'RE ALL ONE FAMILY
THANKS TO THE MUSIC IN OUR LIVES
FOR HELPING US TO SURVIVE
LOST IN ONE LONELY DREAM
BORN TO RUN AND LIVE FREE

ENDNOTES:

1) Actually the thing about lyrics not being as important as aesthetics? Now that G.L.O.S.S. exists in the world, I know what it's like to give a fuck about lyrics. I freak out about those lyrics; those lyrics are directly relevant to my life. So: G.L.O.S.S. and the Bouncing Souls. Is this how you fucks feel all the time? That must rule for you!

2) About the Bouncing Souls *Pretty In Pink* shirt: I used to have such serious intense gender feelings about Molly Ringwald in John Hughes movies. I still do. That's why a couple months ago I changed the title of this column to a cool line from *The Breakfast Club*. This column was actually about John Hughes movies the whole time!

3) John from Strictly Platonic is in a band in Philly called Bunny Hop now. They are better than Strictly Platonic.

4) Next month: back to hating on stuff and talking shit!

So, I got this really sweet letter in response to my column two issues back about my car breaking down on the Jersey Turnpike. It was from a guy who's in the process of quitting drinking and he wrote to me about his own struggle, because I'd mentioned in that column that I had quit drinking around three years ago.

I was just starting to write him back, when I realized that maybe some of his questions/some of my experience might prove valuable or useful to people besides just the two of us. I know when I was first getting off booze, reading people's accounts of what was hard for them/what they struggled with/how they got through it, was really helpful for me, so maybe this can be like that for you? Anyway, here's a segment of his letter:

"One thing I am really apprehensive about, though, is going to gigs and not drinking. Where I live in _____ and the surrounding areas, the punk scene is pretty much exclusively populated by mad speedfreaks that stay up for weeks on end drinkin' rum. While I used to be able to dip in and out of this when I wanted (I'm a newly qualified nurse in hospital, so don't have so much time for partying as I once did) I cant imagine it being so easy while I'm not boozing, and I'm half scared, 'cos it feels like alcohol is such a big part of my personality. And half 'cos I'm concerned that people will think its weird or not cool or something that I'm sober. Ain't that awful?

So while I'm finding more time to play drums in my band, read books, cook tasty food for my non-punk/9-5 kinda friends, and write emails to total strangers (Hi!) it almost feels like I'm sellin' out not seeing so much of my punk buddies. I think this idea that they're gonna judge me is all in my head, but it's still affecting me. Punk is love, and I need to rectify how I feel about this situation (while staying sober). I'm writing to ask, did you feel a similar way about social situations, gigs etc? Have you encountered any negative responses from friends? How did you find the best way to deal with the practicalities of hanging out with a load of drunk punx lifestyle while not wanting to be a fuckhead anymore? (OK, I might be putting this on you a bit, but I hope you get what I mean?)"

When I quit drinking I was a neurotic mess about going to shows for a long time. So much of my conception of punk and my punk identity was tied to this sense of nihilism and like, getting fucking wasted, and it's hard to disentangle those things because sober people are racist white straightedge jock straight dude goons who fucking suck, right? Or like, Dharma Punx, which I'm sure is cool to lots of people (and is even cool for people I know) but to me just seems hella corny and kinda dumb (sorry, y'all, no offense). Also for me, I realized I was medicating a bunch of mental health shit—gender anxiety, social anxiety, anxiety anxiety, etcetera, etcetera, foreva and eva—with booze and that in the absence of booze all human interaction was fraught with hypertense bullshit. It didn't help that I was drinking 900 cups of coffee, smoking 8000 cigarettes, eating one million candy bars (quitting booze makes you crave sugar *like woah*), and never sleeping, so I was a Fucking

Wreck.

But that's not what you're talking about necessarily. I think what you're talking about is that thing where you have all these friendships that were centered heavily on drinking and drug use, and when you stop doing those things you wonder if there's anything left to hang the friendship on. I had so many fears about judgment when I quit drinking. I was afraid people would think I was a wimp. I was afraid people would think I was judging them for still drinking so they would preemptively judge me. I was afraid that me and the people I thought I cared about would just have nothing to say to each other.

In some cases I was right. There were some people I felt super close with as a booze hound who, when I gave it up, I realized I had very little in common with beyond a proclivity for getting super fucked up. And that was for sure a drag, but more often then not I realized that there was way more to my friendships than I had pessimistically imagined and that I wasn't giving myself or my friends enough credit for being full three-dimensional human beings.

This one time like six months into "sobriety" (I am not actually sober, I def fuck with some weed tincture every now and again and occasionally still use Other Drugs, but we'll use "sober" as shorthand for "not drinking") I found out this friend of mine from Seattle was coming to town with his band. I got really stressed out and worried because every time he and I hung out we would rage so hard. The last time I'd seen him we'd drank a gallon of cooking wine from the Food Bank because the beer store was closed. It was nasty and tasted like soy sauce and we both puked but it was hella funny and fun and definitely one of those Picturesquely Haggard Times I still talk about when I reminisce about what a Lovable Scamp I used to be. Anyway, he was coming to town and his band was playing a show at this punk house and I knew I couldn't handle the show without getting wasted, so I asked him if he wanted to get lunch that afternoon. We ended up walking around for hours shooting the shit and he never told me I was a wuss and didn't seem the least bit concerned about my not drinking and in fact, he was just stoked for me!

And that sort of thing happened again and again. It was all about finding alternatives to typical punk hangs and doing daytime stuff for a while. It took me a couple years to get the hang of sobriety enough to feel like I could handle partying again without booze, but I think I spent that time well, and now that I'm back I feel like I'm so much better at being around people. Because I took the time to deal with my shit and instead of showing up to the gig with a bunch of baggage that I have to slowly shed with each sip of whiskey, I just go out excited to see bands and catch up with people and have a good time.

So, one of the things that you need to do is be patient. Maybe you don't feel ready to go to shows yet. It totally seems like not going to shows for a while is the end of the world, but actually it's not because when you're ready to go to shows again, they'll still be happening. Some of the people will be different and that'll be cool because they'll know you for the first time as a person who doesn't drink and you won't have to do any re-branding (har har). Also, like, I know punk stuff happens really fast so maybe you'll miss some stuff, but who cares?! Like, I missed out on that band Iceage entirely. But, fucking, *whatever*. Like, if the worst thing that happened because I quit going to shows for a while is that I didn't get to see some handsome Scandinavian boys do hardcore (were they even a hardcore band? I still haven't heard them) then I got off pretty easy.

More practically, I found I really like to drink things out of glass, beer or liquor sized bottles. Specifically fancy ginger beers and seltzers. There's something about holding on to a glass bottle at house shows that's super comforting. If you're at a bar and you can't bring in a fancy seltzer of your own you can have them make you a seltzer with bitters, which is a delicious drink and looks like a cocktail of some sort so people don't really ask what it is. *Also* there's this stuff called Milky Oat Seed tincture that Caroline told me curtails booze cravings and I don't know if it actually works or I just trust Caroline, but it seemed to work for me.

And then it's also good to remember that if people start bumming you out or you get stressed, you can just leave! It's not the end of the world to just dip out and in fact it makes you seem super mysterious and romantic. Who knows what you're up to?! You do, obviously, but no one else does. They probably think you're doing something really cool. In my experience most people don't even think about it at all because they're so busy partying even if they notice for a second that you're gone pretty soon they forget about it because they have to do Jaeger shots with the drummer of the touring band from Tokyo.

Mostly the key to not drinking and still hanging out is not putting too much pressure on yourself to do it until you're ready. Also go to therapy. I lucked out and found an awesome therapist before I quit drinking to deal with some other shit, but I've been seeing her for like four or five years now and it's pretty rad having someone to talk to. And like, I didn't go to AA or any meetings, but that's because I work in a diner that a bunch of AA folks hang out in and would just talk to them about stuff. But it's nice to get a crew of sober friends too. Lots of punks are "in recovery" or whatever.

Okay! I hope that helped! If anyone else wants to ask me something or thinks I'm totally wrong and wants to call me names for insulting Dharma Punx, write me at sliceharvester@gmail.com or Colin Atrophy / 442-D Lorimer St #230 / Brooklyn, NY 11206.

And remember: Fuck Billy Joel. Fuck Your Negative Attitude. We. Are. THE PUNX.

By Darryl Andrew Reid

"I think we were all tired of the totally substance-free white boy "slimy creep" thing—all these dudes whose identities are reflected everywhere but who see themselves as outcasts. We're tired of punk catering to white men, and excluding all others. We want to make jocks feel uncomfortable and targeted. We're not trying to be weird, we are just actual outcasts of society—queers, trans women, women of color, gender queer femmes, feminists, etc., and we love hardcore and are sick of being sidelined and misrepresented, so we are representing ourselves."
— G.L.O.S.S.

Unlike what many punks have deluded themselves into thinking, punk/hardcore has become increasingly hetero/homo/cis/normative, sexist, and whitewashed over the years. Most pass this off as just the fact that punk appeals to het/cis/white males. Paradoxically they also declare that that punk is made for and by society's outcasts. Increasingly over the years, I'm starting to wonder: is it?

Why does it seem that overwhelmingly year after year we are only seeing the same bodies, gender identities and races coming into punk music? Why is the face of punk becoming more and more white, male, hetero and cis? And how come every time we point this out to people the only response is to point out some trans, queer, black, band that existed at some point in the history of punk rock? If you point out that the scene is very white, they will point you to Bad Brains. If you point out a lack of trans folks in the scene, they will point out Against Me. I mean, it has become so bad that when a band like G.L.O.S.S comes along, which represents me and my kind, we have to lap it up like it's a cup of water in the middle of a desert and we're dying of thirst.

What's shitty is that while we occasionally see queer, black, and non-black POC's coming into the punk/hardcore scene, the bands we see being formed and championed are increasingly made up the same dominant bodies and voices: usually white cis men. Even the history of the formation of punk is often written about with a complete disregard for queer bands that don't fit the white cis het narrative (or the equally problematic homo-normative narrative where some queer bands were okay as long as they weren't "too queer") that has been built up over the years. Along with this historical myopia is the nostalgia factor that champions masculine ideas of punk as being dangerous and violent.

Trans folks and queer folks face threats of violence (both overt and implied) on a daily basis, and must navigate a world that is hostile to them. As a result, violence instigated by macho dude bros is not something they should or want to deal with. The romanticized idea that punk should be violent and dangerous (whatever the fuck that means) is entirely a creation of this cis het ideology.

Another factor that bars queer folk from engaging with punk are the gatekeepers who insist punk be kept "pure." Most punks will scream with all the gusto they can muster that they are in fact antifa, while at the same time buying into the completely fascistic mindset that punk must be guarded from "posers" (ie: outsiders and others). This bullshit rhetoric should, to anyone with a brain, come uncomfortably close to the rhetoric that white supremacists employ. The idea that a person must fit themselves into the narrow confines of the punk rulebook is a fundamentally fascistic idea that stems from insecurities that punk can't stand on its own merits, and must constantly be defended from outsiders and others.

This extremely male/cis/hetero/white gatekeeping pushes many people out and turns people off of the scene before they even have a chance to find their place in it. Punk can either be inclusive or elite: it cannot be both at the same time. Elitism just breeds conformity, and conformity is boring and gross and you might as well become a fucking Republican.

Queer punk doesn't have to worry about legitimacy because queer folk are already outsiders—they are society's others and outcasts. Being an outcast is a part of their daily existence. It is not an artifice they have to constantly maintain or prove the way cis/het/white/male punks must. In my own experience as a closeted trans woman, the idea of having to prove my "punkness," while feeling like an outcast in the community that was supposed to embrace me, was exhausting. Having to be "legit" while in gender purgatory was an extra level of hell I refuse to be a part of. Punk points are for assholes and fascists.

Most punks will tell you that they want to draw queer folks into the scene but "they just aren't coming out to shows." They may even claim that punk doesn't appeal to queer folks, or they will even claim that queer folks *are* coming out to shows. "Hey look at all the queer folk in the scene." This is part of the paradox we see repeated often.

"There is no contradiction between punk and queer. Looking back to their roots, punk and queer were like cousins who followed the same path, both opposing social values and conventional behavior. Over time they have turned into systems themselves, becoming more conservative and excluding each other." — The Queer Punk Manifesto

This isn't an issue of wooing queers into the scene or of who exactly punk appeals to. What this is actually about is representation, and whose voices are being heard at any one time. Girls love punk, queers love punk, freaks love punk, trans folks love punk. So why aren't there more bands singing about/representing queer issues? And why aren't bands like Dick Binge getting as much play as Gag or Glue or any other cis/het band out there?

Don't get me wrong—it's not like there is some overarching villain controlling all of this. I do not buy into the Illuminati. Queers aren't represented in the scene because punks are unwilling to take the actions needed to become a viable counter culture instead of just another subculture. We are a subculture that has bought into the cis-normative/hetero-normative supremacy because it is so vast and so pervasive that counteracting it takes too much effort.

"For people who are marginalized in other ways by society, punk/hardcore/the DIY underground provides a really necessary vent and outlet—it is a place where our anger and frustration and sadness and differing perspectives should be valued, but, just like society at large, the microcosm of punk society can get dominated by a particular type of aggressive straight cis able-bodied white dude voice. The people who have the most power feel the most empowered to use their voices all the time, right? That's why punk community specifically designed to take into account multiple perspectives, multiple voices, to challenge a history in which said white dudes are over represented, is so important." – Jes Skolnik

Of course there are those who actively silence folks and try to derail conversations. You can recognize these people 'cause they still think Weekend Nachos are a great band and the Casualties are the shit, and that a few rape allegations don't take away from how important their music is. They are the people who think safe spaces are "too PC" for the punk scene and constantly act like punk should be dangerous and scary. When you defend the shitty behavior of popular bands and hoist them up as a symbol of what it means to be punk/hardcore, you are sending a strong message to women/queers/trans folks/people of color/black folks, etc. that they are not welcome in the scene. Angry white males (who frankly are a dime a dozen) constantly pine and whine for the old days when punk was. "dangerous." I don't see it as that way—I see the old punk attitudes and "danger" as the shitty behaviors of a bunch of shitty people. I think punk should be angry, but this has to be a directed anger at power and those with power, and, sorry, but who is the biggest representation of power? White dudes. This is the contradiction of modern hardcore/punk.

Beyond more diverse representation, what is needed is space for queer voices to be heard. We need to encourage queer people to form bands and to let them know that they will be taken as seriously as an equivalent hetero band. We need to let queer people know that they are a benefit to punk, and that their voices, stories and talents are appreciated. The silencing needs to stop.

ENDNOTES:

1) OK, this isn't an attack on white cis people or any kind "reverse racism" 'cause that shit does not exist. White people are allowed in the scene and can be punk.

2) When I talk about violence, I am talking about acts of violence. I am not talking about moshing. Though moshing is most often dominated by white boys throwing down, I do not want to get into another bullshit argument about moshing/stagediving. Queer people/trans people/women like to mosh, too.

3) Punk is about radical thought and action, it is not a place for right-wing assholes/cops and other agents/defenders of oppression. When I talk about policing the scene I'm talking about macho attitudes surrounding what bands are legitimate, what is the proper hair length, etc. In fact, having cops at a punk show or cop wannabe assholes will do more to chase off queer folks than anything.

4) When I say homo-normative, I am talking about the idea that only certain types of queerness are acceptable, i.e. white/cis/male-female (filtered through the male gaze—no butches allowed!) and dedicated to monogamy and eschewing all public displays of gayness. It is the young urban gay professional.

5) I am fully aware that white hetero cis males face problems, and that they too can be outcasts, especially when they do not conform to society's rules of masculinity. So please fuck off with your MRA arguments.

5 BASIC WAYS CIS WOMEN CAN BE DECENT TO TRANS WOMEN

by Sadie Switchblade

1) Avoid "female bodied."

A lot of well-intentioned friends, earnestly trying to employ kind language around trans people's bodies, use the term "female-bodied" in regard to trans men, cis women, and other AFAB (Assigned Female At Birth) people. I understand the intention, but what is a "female body" and who gets to determine its attributes? Isn't a trans woman's body inherently female? Not to mention, calling a trans guy's body "female" is pretty rude, too. Referring to someone as "female-bodied" undermines their identity in an extreme way. You can be a female with a penis. Penis does not equal un-female. And vagina does not equal female! I usually

just say "people with vaginas" or "person with a dick" in situations where genitals are actually relevant (which are rare).

2) Don't say things like "Your makeup is better than mine!" or constantly comment on our looks.

Genuine compliments are always nice, but many trans women struggle with damaged self-esteem and have developed a sixth-sense for condescension. No shit my makeup is better than yours, girl! In order to be read as female in a society that constantly tells me I'm male, I have to rely on makeup (and other physical cues) a lot more than your average cis woman. Secondly, while it's nice to be called pretty, I've grown an almost impenetrable membrane of skepticism that makes it nearly impossible for me to feel pretty—and that informs the way I hear compliments. I'm not here to boost anyone's Tolerance Ego—I don't need to be tolerated or accepted. I don't want to be Trans Best Friend, you know? I don't need a bunch of sass every time I femme it up, I don't need to be told I look "fierce" (lol). Compliments are sweet, but save them for when they're sincere.

3) Understand why a "women-only" space that allows trans men does not feel safe for us.

Being a trans woman, I understand the need for so-called Safe Spaces for women (whether these spaces can actually exist is another question). But "safe spaces" created by cis women are often unsafe for trans women. For example: many "women-only" spaces created by cis women allow trans men. Transgender men are men. To say otherwise is to be inherently transphobic, and to imply that trans men aren't really men (wink-wink). Cis women who create "women-only" spaces that include trans men are completely blind to the ways that many trans men shit on trans women. Cis women are blind to this because of cis privilege. That's fine. But while you may feel more safe around trans men than cis men, most trans women don't. Trans men can be some of the most vehemently transmisogynistic pieces of garbage on earth. You don't experience this, but try not to ignore it.

Meanwhile, while trans women are viewed as artificial and undesirable ("who would want to be a woman?"), trans men are viewed as authentic and enviable ("who wouldn't want to be a man?"). Trans men are the hot-shots of the queer community, and trans women are the punchlines to their jokes. Misogyny at work. Cis women and trans men have access to all sorts of mobility, yet trans women are routinely barred from and made to feel uncomfortable in public spaces and in "women-only" spaces alike.

4) Do not tell us about our male privilege.

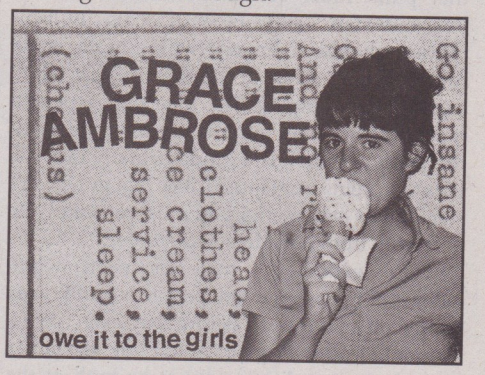
This one is common and extremely frustrating. Do you think that if you told a stereotypical butch cis lesbian, raised by a single father and brothers, hardened by years of working construction for a living, liver-damaged from binge drinking with the boys, etc., that she had "male privilege", that she would receive that well? Doubtful. Male privilege is for men. You can't have male privilege if you aren't male! Certainly, we live under patriarchy, a system that values masculinity over femininity and affords conditional privileges accordingly. But trans women typically aren't masculine, and we definitely, most fucking certainly, are not men. Being "socialized male" when you are female is a form or ritual trauma designed to destroy transfeminine people. Most of us have suffered brutality (and probably continue to) from the ways in which masculinity has been imposed on us. We had to grow up inundated with misogyny the same way that cis women did, and just because we were hiding ourselves doesn't mean that we didn't experience the pain of misogyny or weren't hurt by it. At the intersection of misogyny and transmisogyny, our femininity has been targeted since the beginning.

Furthermore, why are masculine cis women lauded as gender-rebel feminists, yet trans women who exhibit masculine traits are de-gendered and aggressively invalidated right and left? There are so many ways trans women have had to tailor our experiences just to be accepted by cis people as women. Which brings me to my next point....

5) Don't say shit like "Welcome to being a woman."

Cis women: you are not gatekeepers of womanhood. You do not have birthright to femininity, you do not have the authority to grant me permission to be a woman. However I am a woman is valid. Try not to name your specific experience of womanhood as the definitive experience of womanhood. Don't suggest that my experience of womanhood is inauthentic, that I have not in fact experienced womanhood. I could turn it around and accuse you of the same. But I, nor society, would never tell you that you aren't a woman, no matter how outside the mainstream narratives of "a woman's experience" your life or presentation seemed to me. Right? And you don't have to deal with being misgendered constantly and told that you are not who you are.

Lastly, please, don't accuse trans women of "appropriating" femininity. You don't have sole ownership of it. This is busted 2nd-wave thinking! It is fucking bullshit to be told by society that we need to be hyper-feminine in order to be "legitimate" women, all the while being scolded by "feminists" who tell us that we are performing our closest approximation of "real" womanhood, but are doing a disservice to "women" (i.e. cis women) by propagating stereotypes about womanhood. The bottom line is, you don't get to tell me if I'm woman-enough. I am fucking woman-enough!



Later on in these pages, I review *Punk*, a conversation in chapbook form between Mimi Thi Nugyen and Golnar Nikpour, which, among other things, delves into punk's fraught relationship with one massive institution: academia. Mimi concludes the text with a sentiment that bears frequent repetition: "Punk is a plural, rather than a coherent, series of forms or formations, that can and should resist institutionalization."

But what of punk institutions themselves? As a phrase it seems inherently contradictory, but, of course, *Maximum* is perhaps the foremost example. It's a complicated construct. Navigating change in the face of a long and public history is difficult—choices reverberate far beyond your local sphere; people have a lot of ideas about what you should and shouldn't do, and little grasp on the realities of the day to day. Here at *Maximum*, we belong to a history but we are not beholden to it. The magazine's character morphs with the people who are putting it together, though the people who put it together all necessarily agree to abide by certain things central to its identity.

As a punk kid growing up on the East Coast, I dreamed of having a place like 924 Gilman in my town. As a punk adult who has been involved in two concentrated projects to get all-ages, sustainable DIY spaces off the ground in Philadelphia and London (where, if I'm not mistaken, they

just signed a lease!), it's a name that cropped up over and over again in conversation. For people the world over, it's more of an idea than a place. Of course, distance allows a bit of fuzzy vision—as a thirteen-year-old in the suburbs of Washington, D.C., I had yet to discover the joys of stagediving (famously forbidden at the space) or hear about the realities of membership meetings (infamously drawn-out)—but Gilman (alongside *Maximum*, ABC No Rio, and the Che Café) was an important beacon of the power and possibility of operating on your own terms.

At a meeting in early April, the current membership of Gilman voted to allow a major label band to play the club, as a part of a weekend-long benefit for victims of a massive warehouse fire which impacted institutions such as long-running anarchist publisher AK Press and 1984 Printing, destroyed homes, and left two dead. I won't be attending anymore—I'm choosing to support the fire-relief efforts in other ways (info at the end of this column; if you can, you should support them, too!). Green Day playing a gig at Gilman in 2015 feels like the long-percolating punch line to a terrible joke, but somehow, it's the embarrassing reality.

Of course, the major / independent label distinction is less of an active battleground than it once was. Major labels still blow (duh), but lots of technically independent labels are also in bed with corporations—burrito chains, car brands, shoe companies, to name but a few—vampiric relationships sucking an aura of authenticity out of the underground. It's more difficult to suss out the people who don't wear their capitalism on their sleeves, which makes them even more insidious. Green Day, though? Still firmly in the not-punk camp. I think it's borderline sociopathic that they want to play the club. They know the rules. After years of being told "no," they get in when the community is hurting. A cash cow, but this time for a good cause, so it's okay, right?

The community-driven benefit that was being planned was already set to be a massive success. As a recent arrival to the Bay Area, I was looking forward to making my first visit to Gilman for the occasion. The terms of the narrative are going to shift—Billie Joe and crew will be the ones saving the downtrodden local businesses now. If Green Day wants to support the victims, they can write a check (with a net-worth in the millions, they probably need a tax write-off, yeah?), or play a different venue and donate the proceeds (there are certainly many larger, better-equipped spaces in the Bay Area which would be happy to have them). I'm looking forward to watching footage of the performance in the upcoming East Bay punk documentary they are producing, where it will surely be framed as a heartwarming homecoming. It's certainly exhausting to write about Green Day in the pages of this magazine, a band that has been irrelevant to the state of DIY punk for almost as long as I have been alive. As for Gilman and their nearly three decades of saying "no" to major label bands, a remarkable and respectable achievement? I'll quote my fellow coordinatrix Mariam Bastani here: "Way to flush it."

Gilman's relevance to the strain of punk and hardcore I am interested in has been waning for years, but it's still a vitally important space for young kids to see bands and play shows. As someone whose relationship to the club is largely in the abstract, and largely built on hearsay from 3,000 miles away, the news was still deeply disappointing; for many long-time volunteers and members here in the Bay Area, I know it was heartbreaking.

Gilman was created for people who needed it, who didn't have viable other options of places to play. The landscape of the music industry (*b a r f*) has changed and most of the bands booked there now could just as easily play elsewhere. I'm sure that for many it's just another to place to play a show, but equally sure that the significance of its long-running independent spirit isn't lost on all. Institutions like *Maximum* and Gilman need to actively resist the commodification of the subculture we've been a part of for decades, not facilitate the visibility of people who don't give a fuck about us and what we stand for.

Collectives are nuanced and difficult beasts, endlessly frustrating. I've never been to a Gilman membership meeting, and I'm sure many people will tell me I have no right to complain as a result. The thing about institutions is that the communities they belong to trust the people who keep them going to act in their best interest, to uphold the tenets on which they were founded and for which they are valued. Change is important—necessary!—as is compromise, but certain choices by the current collective reveal to me what seems to be a fundamental misunderstanding of Gilman, its image in the world, and why it is valuable to people here in the Bay Area and beyond. Or perhaps I'm the one who misunderstood.

I understand this much: take nothing for granted, trust no man, and do-it-yourself, cause if you leave it to anyone else, they're inevitably gonna fuck it up.

ENDNOTES:

1) Visit akpress.org/fire-relief.html for information on how to donate to the Fire Relief Fund. Proceeds will be split between AK, 1984, and the building residents who lost their homes in the fire.

2) DIYSpaceForLondon.org for more on how to get involved with a nascent—and hopefully long-running!—DIY space. Read Bryony's columns in the coming months for news on that and interviews with punks who run DIY spaces around the globe.

3) Rest in power, Freddie Gray and Walter Scott.

4) The other day, someone posted "What's with all this black shit?" on the *MRR* Facebook. I deleted countless hateful comments on posts about Mumia, Osa's list of current Black punk bands, and Columbus' new all-Black hardcore band Minority Threat. If you racist fucks are reading this: this magazine is not for you and it never has been. Take your bigotry elsewhere.

5) I'm writing this from the big bedroom at the compound, dubbed the Babe Den by nameless coordinators-past. Lydia moved out this month—very sad to see her go but hope that the newfound free time means that *malaka* is gonna start a band. She ably steered the magazine for the past couple of years, taught me loads about Greek punk and how to decipher metal font, did more than her fair share of emotional processing with me, and offered the best introduction to this massive *institution* I could ask for. She'll be missed, but thankfully isn't going too far.

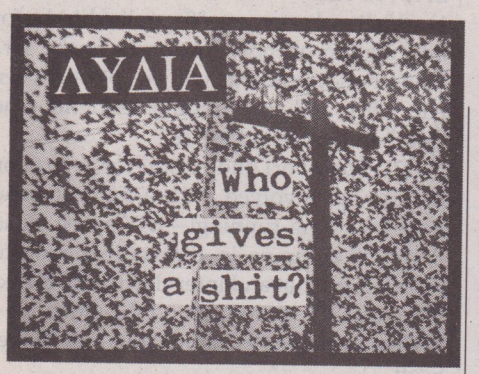
6) Rachel Aggs is a musical genius, everyone else should destroy their guitars.

7) Lime Crush is a force to be reckoned with. I'm begging them to let me put out a record in the States. 7" of the year so far!

8) Shitfucks from Sweden wrote to me after I asked for clarification on their lyrics—they're mostly about the environment and how big companies are destroying it, as well as about how the band is anti-political parties that are anti-immigration. I bought a bunch of distro copies and they all disappeared into the hot hands of rabid punks but you should write to them to buy your own. (shitfucks.se)

9) Yesterday, Layla and I went to see *Wanda*, a film written, directed, and starred in by a woman named Barbara Loden, made in 1970. Screened in 35mm at the Castro Theater, it was a revelation in every way, like a Truffaut film set in anthracite country! Gut-wrenching. See it if you can.

10) *Punk*, the chapbook, is available online, and all proceeds benefit *MRR*. More information at therejectionist.com.



"Infatigables"

Fuckin' hell what a crazy month! It's 11:45 p.m., this column is (of course) late and due in a few hours, and I've just come back from the Youth Avoiders show in Oakland (they were super tight!). Touring with them right now are also Dry Heaves, but sadly I missed their set as I was literally throwing the last of my boxes into my new room as they were starting their set. (I have cool friends who send me text updates because I'm perpetually late for things!) I recorded a radio show with Youth Avoiders and Dry Heaves yesterday, then we got cheesesteaks and smoked weed in the park overlooking the SF skyline, freezing as the fog rolled in! ...Fuck, I am gonna miss meeting and greeting all the rad punks who came through the house while living at *MRR*—and the record collection...and shitworkers and assigning and layouts and emailing back and forth with all of you...

I did two trips with all my crap from SF to my new spot in Oakland, but not before going through three hours of radio post-production hell (with a hangover), literally slamming my laptop shut and shoving it in my bag as the others yelled, "Come on, come on! We've got to go go go!" But—the radio show was successfully posted and I had so much fun with them all; best punks, the lot of them! Never been to Sheffield, but from the likes of those lads, it's probably a fun punk scene up there. Check out their sets, they played some cool Sheffield punk! And it was great to see Youth Avoiders pull out French records, all of us geeking out on Taulard and Camera Silens! And of course if you're a punk with any sense, or taste, you're obsessing over Rixe right now like I am (eh, and a bunch of other people, too). So imagine my delight when I found out that Max, who plays guitar in Youth Avoiders, is also the drummer of Rixe! Très cool! I confessed that the song "Infatigables" was like a kick in the ass for me; an emblematic song that gave me strength!

The hunt for a new place to live had seemed endless (technically it started in November) and by April 10 (with April 15 being our move out date) I still hadn't found anywhere. There were days when I'd wake up to three rejection emails—which I guess is fine because I probably wouldn't want to live with people whose prerequisites were "No pets. No smoking. No drugs. No overnight guests. No loud music. No parties." "...and no mail!" added Jason Ryan as I laughed and moaned over another empty beer can, at that point of mental exhaustion when you start to laugh at your own delirium.

There were definitely a few nights when the only thing I did was drink drink drink after a long day of hauling boxes at work, endlessly scrolling through craigslist, getting more depressed and angry at the situation, sad to be leaving but also ansy to be out of limbo land. Getting used to not being at or within a few blocks from MRR, trying to finish up projects and tie up loose ends while poorly balancing my old responsibilities with my new schedule; packing more records and books than I thought I could accumulate in three years, in a country to which I arrived with merely a suitcase.

And then, bam! Record Store Day was already upon us, and (if you hadn't already guessed) that's one of Revolver's busiest seasons. After which we celebrated Liquor Store Day, and just got piddled while moaning and laughing about the craziness we'd all just been through. (Hello, Revolver people who read this!)

I have mixed emotions about Record Store Day, so I'll say this: what may have started as a way to support small, independent record stores, has turned into the music industry's Black Friday—it's rather sickening but also not entirely surprising. For decades, the vinyl industry and its pressing plants were held afloat by relatively indie clients; punks obviously never ceasing to need their wax. But this is capitalism we live with, so of course major labels hopped on the chance to make more money from another Grateful Dead record. Also, bitch time, but who really needs another Nirvana covers album? *Nirvana covers*. Like that band hasn't been covered to the end of the universe and back already...and even if the bands weren't meh (which I think they are), their renditions were sometimes painful to sit through...and with the *worst* fuckin' baby-blue cover...

On Record Store Day I didn't buy any records (very consciously so) but I did see Silent Era at Thrillhouse, which has teamed up with Prank Records and added new sections. As Ken Sanderson said, "there's now a Soundtrack section." (Fine with me!) Mariam was also in town briefly before flying out to Europe on tour with Permanent Ruin. If they're coming through your town, make sure you see them, they're great live and lovely people! Oh, I also had my first Greek experience after three years of living here: I had Easter lunch with a Greek friend, her husband, her mother and...an Australian Orthodox priest (!) who'd lived in Greece for years...

Now I'm sitting at my new desk, in my new home, eating a stone cold burrito from four hours ago on a plastic Snoopy Christmas plate, exhausted and achy from ten days of couch-surfing all around the Bay (thank you Will, Ben, Travis and Michelle!), reeking as if I've only showered twice in that time (which is a fact) but feeling pretty pumped that this long ass month is almost over! This is my 36th issue of *MRR*, almost my third month at Revolver (the half-way home for coords) and—*omergwad I just noticed*—exactly three years since I left Greece to come to SF to coordinate what you're holding in your hands right now! And tonight is the first night I officially no longer live at *MRR*... [*shivers*] Uncanny!

We're still looking for that special someone to coordinate with team supreme Grace and Eli, so get in touch for an application! You can reach me at lydia@maximumrocknroll.com.

Hey, Punk! Do you want to write a column for* Maximum Rocknroll? *We're looking for music columnists who are interested in covering garage, tough guy hardcore, that goth-punk stuff everyone seems to like so much, and more. Send us an email introducing yourself, along with a sample column (1000-2000 words), and outlines of three potential column topics: mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. Guest column submissions are always welcome—publication not guaranteed!

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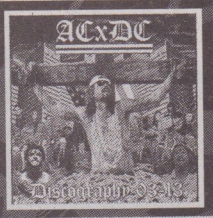

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What now for the radical punk faction? We're nearly forty years deep and the revolution seems eons further away that it did in 1976. Downtown Boys is a serious band. Like Crass rewritten from the hips, their rage is contemporary, personal evolution b/w social revolution, a call to arms fuelled by love, rage, analysis, and saxophones. They're enabling sincere, precise messages about power, capital and oppression to resonate for a generation of punks who've come up through an era of unprecedented irony, with all the defanging that entails. Downtown Boys' chaotic, multi-lingual noise finds its climax at the spot where activist smarts meet joyful abandon, imbued with an appreciation for the radical possibilities of pop. Unified by the righteous staccato howl of undeniable front woman Victoria M. Ruiz, they are smashing binaries and ridiculing the powerful whenever they can. Their first full-length is out presently on Don Giovanni Records. I communed with Joey and Victoria from the band.

Interview and introduction by Bryony Beynon.
Photos provided by Farrah Skeiky and the band.

MRR: I have heard Downtown Boys repeatedly called a "brave" band. I was thinking about this and why it's a thing. It feels like the last fifteen years of punk music saw such a steady onset of ironic distancing that being earnest on stage about political conviction became both very rare and in some circles, terribly passé. To say something and appear to mean it had become a cringe-inducing cliché. Maybe to pin your colors to a mast is to place yourself in a fixed position, so in this climate there's a vulnerability that comes with being real, direct, or honest at least in the eyes of a generation lost to the constant carousel of hyper-speed criticism. I wonder if this is why people say you are "brave." What is bravery in the context of a punk band and beyond it?

Joey: We have things we want and need to see change in the world, and we're not going to get those things by being subtle. A hundred years ago, symbols and aesthetics could be dangerous, but it's a different historical moment. We're at a point culturally where to be subtle is to guarantee appropriation by hip neoliberal capital. You can talk about revolution in *Hunger Games* and it means nothing. There's a restaurant in Providence called "Cuban Revolution" that has a giant banner outside of it that says "The Revolution is Now." It means

DOWNTOWN BOYS

nothing. Capital has done a remarkable job of defanging the resistance and young people by packaging up the rebellion as an individualistic lifestyle choice that's mostly about making "alternative" consumer decisions. We don't want to be a part of that, and so we say what we mean very directly and seriously.

MRR: Calling your upcoming record *Full Communism* was always likely to guarantee that every interviewer ever is going to ask you about it. I'm biting. Are you making a nod to the meme, the utopian demand itself, or both?

Joey: We're living in an often hopeless time in the radical community. It's been said over and over again, but we find it easier to imagine the end of the world than a new world. We need to truly believe in some kind of better future and we wanted to get that across with the album name. We didn't want the word *utopia* because it's been used to death and would connote some kind of hippie universe that we're not interested in. We wanted something to make it clear that we're very serious. Bro punks are so obsessed with being "shocking" all the time, as if that's the end-goal of punk. Being oppressive to oppressed people isn't edgy or shocking, it's actually the norm. That's what cops do that's, what bosses do, that's what the society is set up to do. What's truly shocking to the society is to work seriously to dismantle systems of oppression. We want to be shocking in that way.

MRR: In the context of sound, community, politics, what bands, if any, do you consider your peers?

Victoria: There are people all over who are on the same page as us of using music and culture as a part of creating a new society. I hate to list people because I feel bad for not mentioning everyone, but to just give a few examples...There's the Maracuyeah collective in DC, they make great music and put on amazing parties and they're also deeply involved in their community and put on things like DJ workshops for young women of color. There are our friends in San Jose in Try the Pie and Permanent Ruin who make amazing music and also work really hard to build community through events like their Think and Die Thinking Festival that raises funds for the Billy DeFrank Center, an important queer community center. Rich Gutierrez from both of those bands did our album art. I could go on and on, but there are people all over who know that "punk" as a lifestyle is not enough. If we want to survive, if we want our culture to survive, we have to see it as part of a much larger struggle.

MRR: It can often seems like today's punks are much more comfortable limiting their politics to the interpersonal than they are engaging with the injustice down the street. Why do you think this is?

Joey: I often think about that Fugazi line, "Never mind what's been selling, it's what you're buying." Fuck that—it doesn't really matter what you're buying either. It matters what *we're* doing to organize and fight back against power structures. We're not going to win anything with disorganized consumer decisions. This is definitely a problem. We love Fugazi and Minor Threat, but they definitely propagated this punk lifestyle individualism that we're grappling with now. As we were saying earlier, what capital wants is this kind individualized lifestyle activism. It's fine, it can be part of personal liberation, but it isn't where we're going to win. OK—do that stuff, but also get out to the picket line. Get to the Gaza solidarity march. Organize your co-workers to take on your boss.

Victoria: This is a really good question. I think that it is a structural question. When someone decides to limit politics, it literally creates a

border. We live in a way that everything we say, do, hear, think, and therefore refuse to say, do, and think is political. The political is an inherent condition. So I think the best way to then think about this is to redefine what we think of as "today's punk." We want it to be more Fugazian to recognize and fight racism and queerphobia on our streets, classrooms, courtroom, and work site than it is to have a sweet blog or think today's punks "aren't like they used to be." And for it to be more Crassian to sell fruit and arroz con leche on the street of a country you weren't born in and send money home to your husband and kids in your home country where you can no longer live because foreign policies have killed your chance for survival.

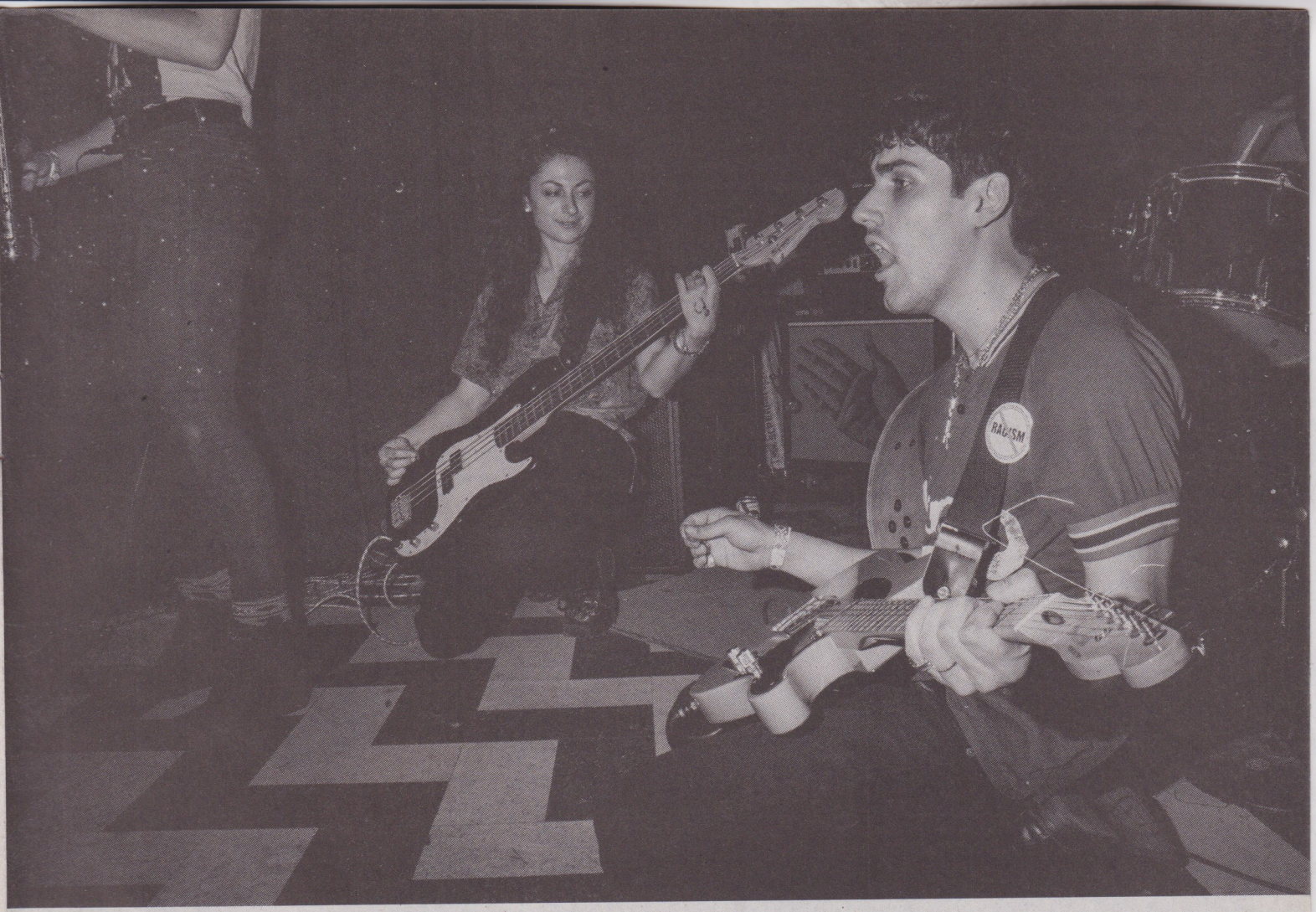
MRR: Pushing forwards a message of tolerance, love and inclusivity whilst fighting against ignorance everywhere is a tough balance to strike. Have you discussed, as a group, what the Downtown Boys method is for confronting this at gigs you play, or is it ad hoc?

Victoria: I do not think that a person could be in this band without feeling passionate about all the things that we are trying to get at. That passion comes from them always being on your mind. I think our music is some sort of pushing out of the things we spend our time thinking about and working on. I have learned so much from all of the people in the band about race, sexuality, capitalism, displacement, identity politics. Not all of us agree on our praxis of how to confront these things, but we are on the same page in terms of what is wrong and unjust about structural oppression. Our lyrics and songs come directly from personal experiences with injustice at work, body politics, policing tactics, and race issues, so when we confront these things through our introductions or our interviews it is very intentional because it is directly coming from the art that we have worked to make and share. Our music is a tactic for using a show space as a political education and really an organizing space against cultural oppression.

MRR: Something about your approach echoes a particular strain of '80s UK anarcho-punk groups that, while being as equally politically engaged as their peers in ripped black uniforms, chose to show that radical punk messages *could* be danceable, glittery and multi-coloured and just as, if not more, impactful as a result. And have horns! It's that old combo of love and rage brought back for a new generation that so desperately needs it. Liberation through jubilation? Does any of this resonate?

Joey: Yeah, I mean, we like to dance and so do most of our friends. It's something that brings people together and usually provides a temporarily better world in the show basement, club, whatever. That's good just baseline. Going deeper, I think there's an important distinction there—we aren't trying to create a distraction to the awful world, but rather help create a new world inside the show space and hopefully inspire folks to go out and do it in the outside world, too. There's a power and joy in that that goes beyond just going to a club (which is awesome and valid also). Love and rage together are greater than the sum of their parts. Political music is often cheesy or boring so no one listens to it. It's ineffective propaganda. But in some ways that conversation is a distraction because the bigger problem is that there is a ton of good political music but it's shut out of mainstream music platforms.

MRR: When it comes to fighting for change, it's often said that you can't admonish a person into seeing things your way. I think about this a lot reading arguments and discussion on the internet. There's a generosity of spirit required, an awareness of nuance, in my mind, that it seems like many young people who are learning about and engaging with politics only on the internet are not so aware of the necessity for. At the same time, the



murder of Michael Brown and the struggle of the people of Ferguson might never have reached the audience it did without the internet being the way it is today. What's your take on how technology has affected both punk music and politics, particularly at grassroots level of both?

Joey: Yes, twitter and other platforms can help disseminate vital information the mainstream media isn't covering. That's important, but more important is the on-the-ground organizing that isn't as widely talked about. It's extremely frustrating to hear people say, for example, that the Arab Spring protests happened because of social media. No, social media is a useful new tool, but it doesn't override the social and economic structures at the root of mass movements. We need to stop thinking of technology as a self-guiding and neutral phenomenon. Tech development follows the interests of existing power structures, and if we want it to serve the people we have to fight for it. The work a lot of our friends are doing in groups like Demand Progress and Fight for the Future to keep the internet open are key, as is everyone posting alternative information and news all over the world.

MRR: Okay, so could each of you complete or respond to the following three statements with as much or as little as you like. First up: There will be no social justice under capitalism…

Joey: There will always been social injustice and inherent contradictions under capitalism, but we can't go at things with an "all in or out" mindset. We can win some social justice under capitalism, some we won't be able to win. We probably won't see the end of capitalism in our lifetimes but we can create some beautiful things for future generations to stand on. There are and have always been innumerable parts of our capitalist world that do not abide by the logic of capitalism, and they are largely the things that make life worth living.

Victoria: I think it is really important to think about power as something similar to energy. We cannot create nor destroy energy and the same is with power. At first I wanted to think about how social justice is won by dismantling systems of oppression that are tactics of capitalism by capitalism. For example, racist police are a tactic of capitalism, and our current public education system in the United States is a product of capitalism. But, I think social justice is much more than dismantling capitalistic structures, I think it is taking power away from hegemonic power. Capitalism is much more than a market economic structure—it is a social structure that relies on emotional debt that does not have a monetary value, but a power value. Which is why workers fight for more than money, we fight for respect. Which is why people of color fight for more than rights and equality, we fight for relevancy and power to the people.

MRR: Number two: There is nothing inherently political about punk…

Victoria: This is actually a very politically charged statement, anything or anyone that thinks we are not more than the sum or our parts has to actively work against the people's history of identifying demands for change. Working actively against the power of the people is a very political action. If punk were not inherently political, then it would probably never have existed. Punk holds no static definition, but is constantly changing in order to meet the cultural hegemon where it's at and say, "I'm about to take you on, I'm about insert so much pain and beauty into you, I'm about to make you feel very uncomfortable." And then punk produces people like me and you.

Joey: Maybe we disagree on this—I tend to say it isn't inherently political. Look at racist skinhead punk, look at the Green Day musical. I guess I mean punk as an aesthetic is nothing. But I hear what you're saying. Maybe it's a semantics thing, like those things don't count because they aren't actually *punk*. I don't know.

MRR: Finally: Voting is still important...
Victoria: People died so that we can vote, so I will try and vote as much as I can. In small communities, especially where people of color and poor people have the potential to have electoral power we see messed up policies such as voter ID laws and weird rigging of voting polls. This means that there is power in voting and that it makes the status quo afraid of what we are going to do with the power. Anything that makes capitalistic white supremacy afraid and threatens its power, I'm down with. And voting does this. I also hope when we get upset that voting doesn't change everything we need to change that it inspires us to look at things outside of electoral politics like grassroots organizing and the creation culture, i.e. art and music.
Joey: It's no more or less important than ever. I vote. We both helped campaign for some amazing candidates in the Providence city council races. It's not the only tactic, but it is a tactic we can't ignore.

MRR: Victoria, you said of the Downtown Boys live show, "we use small incisions in space to cut a really tight shape." I loved this. What do you want a person seeing your band to experience? How do you want someone who comes to see Downtown Boys for the first time to feel?
Victoria: It is crazy because every time we play I think that we are going pretty deep down into the darkest and brightest places of ourselves and pulling out emotions from our subconscious and conscious desires, dreams, and futures. We are trying to relate to people. A lot of us in the band have worked in relational organizing, where you build relationships with people in order to really create demands for change and how to get there. It is the same thing with people at shows. We hope to meet people where they are at in some emotion. It is crazy to look to the audience and be like, "Wow, there is a person here singing the lyrics louder than I am, there is a person here slowly breaking a stern cross of their arms and slowly moving their head, there is a person here who looks like I did when I was sixteen, nerdy, brown, and dirtying the cultural hegemonic brainwash." I really believe that anything we end up feeling is because of something that has always been inside of us. If we are angry, happy, depressed, questioning, lost, arrogant, it is because of something inside of that then gets pulled out during our experiences with the world. What I hope is that our shows pull something out of everyone who is in that space. I hope that people pull out something that they are mad about and ready to change, I hope that people pull out something that they are longing for and know that it is worth it, I hope that people pull stuff out of themselves and walk away knowing that whatever they pulled out is completely relevant. I want people to be with us and feel completely relevant and important.
Joey: I want them to feel comfortable enough to feel cathartic and powerful and beautiful during the show, and inspired enough to keep struggling after the show.
Victoria: I want people to completely forget the categories that we must give to a show. So, I want people to feel free from the trash in music, free from the trash in punk, free from the trash of the power dynamic of having someone talk or do something "at you," free from the trash of gender, race, and class, but very simultaneously, feel the pain and the joy of all those things just mentioned. I am tired of people being "all about the music," and likewise, "all about the politics," it is way more complicated that that, it must be all about the desperation to fight for something that only seems possible because we can conceive it possible. If this can come from that first time, then we aren't remembered for a photo, an intro, a guitar or sax line, we are thought of after the set because of a feeling that we evoked or inspired. A feeling is going to get anyone a whole lot farther than a memory that is bounded by time and space.

Downtown Boys' first LP Full Communism *is out now on Don Giovanni Records.*

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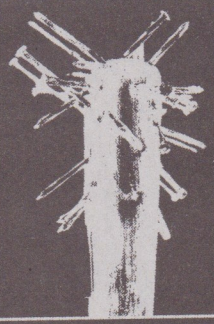

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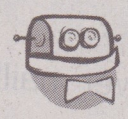

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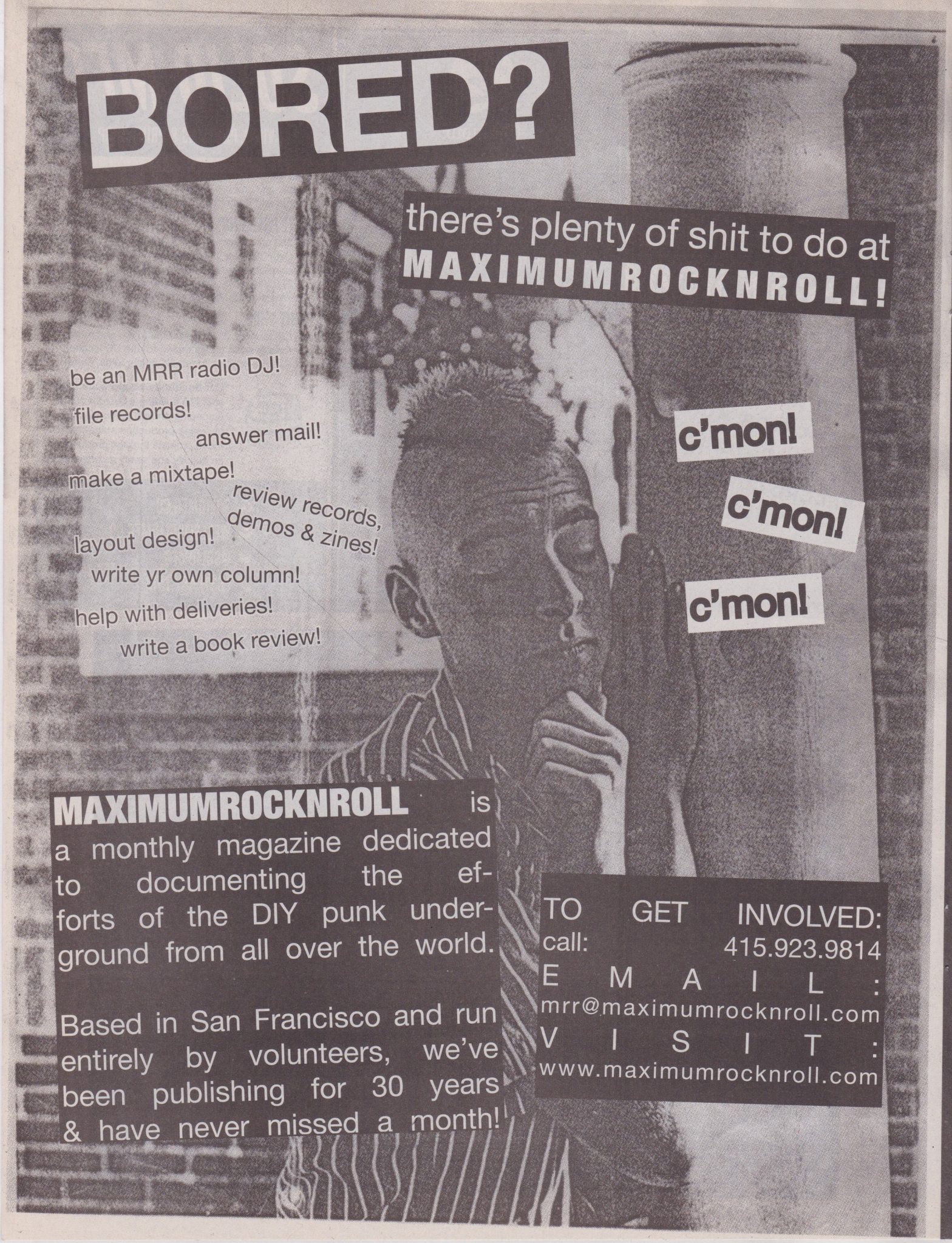
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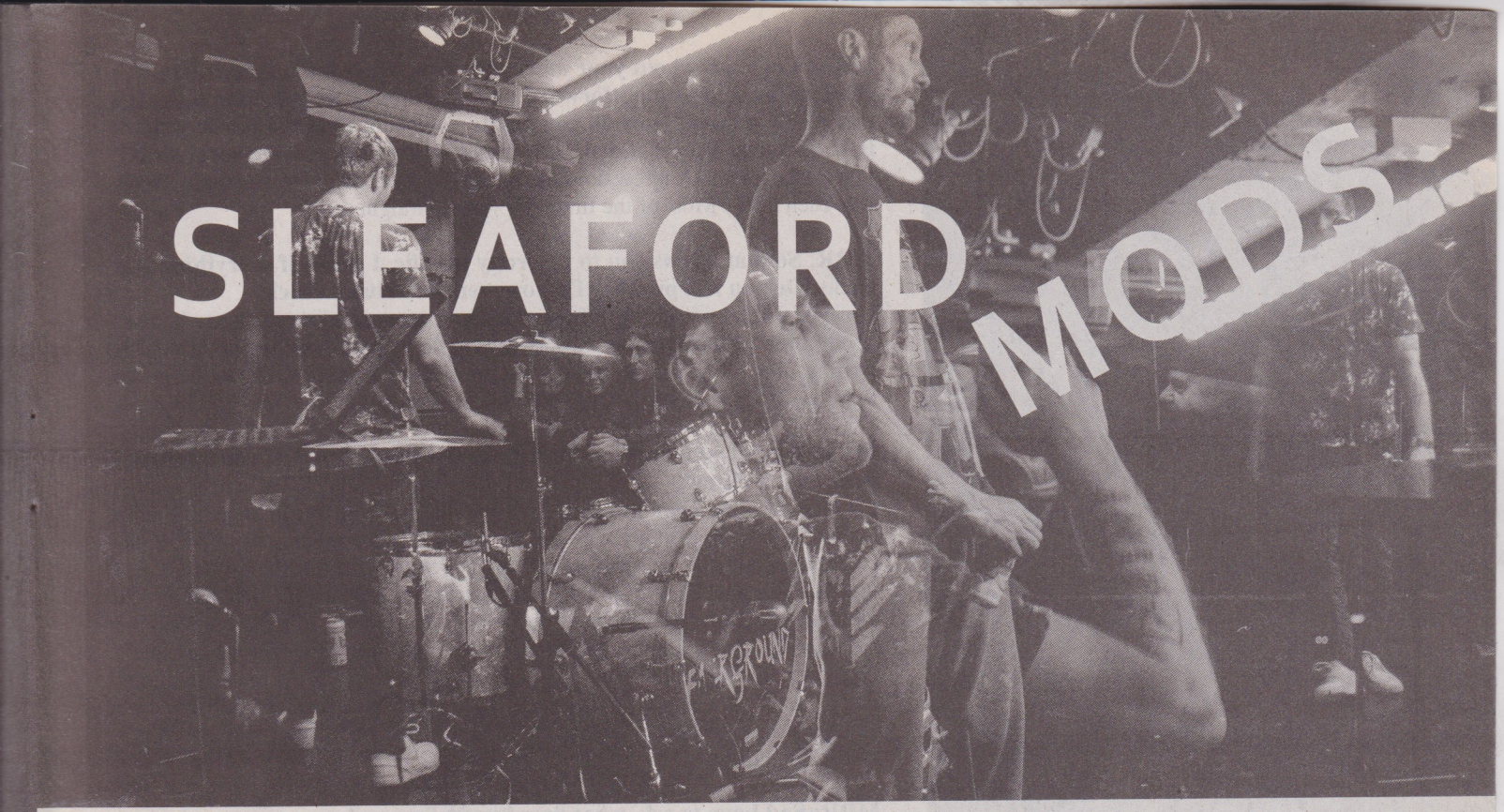

SLEAFORD MODS

In the abstract, Sleaford Mods is odd as fuck. A "band" of two English 40-somethings whose music is as much eccentric electronica as it is punk, Sleaford Mods have wormed and cursed their way into something akin to multifaceted reverence. Everybody either loves them or hates them, only it's weirder than that. Their live show is a trip in perhaps the most mundane way possible: endless grooved loops and politicized fast-talking, one half of the band presses buttons on a laptop, bobbing his head ever so slightly, while the other full on rants, his neck veins bulging as his mouth tries to keep up with the verbal onslaught. It may at first seem like a stark stage presence, but the relentless, controlled fury of the words would pound you into the floor if the music weren't so soothing. All quiet and all storm.

Perhaps that doesn't sound very punk, but it is. Odd, sure, but Sleaford Mods' minimalist execution is so flawless, after only a minute or two, the band's idiosyncrasies fade away and their sound becomes cohesive. A force that's instantly recognizable and completely hard to forget, and most importantly cannot be dismissed. So much so that UK's gigantic daily newspaper, The Guardian, *recently lamented, with a straight face, that Sleaford Mods' 2014 album* Divide and Exit *should have been nominated for a gigantic national music award, the Mercury Prize. While neither* The Guardian, *nor the* Mercury Prize *may be vehicles of good taste, that notoriety (or notoriousness) is proof of the niche Sleaford Mods have carved into England's consciousness. Jason Williamson, Sleaford Mods' lyricist and vocalist, chatted with us on the eve of the band's European tour, a tour that coincided more-or-less with the band's newest US release, a 7" on Arizona's Emotional Response Records. Interview and introduction by Camylle and Matt Reynolds. Photos by Simon Parfrement.*

MRR: First, why "Sleaford"? Why "Mods"?
It just came to me. I like the mod thing and Sleaford is a small town near Grantham where I'm from. As a child we would go there and vist the cinema as Grantham didn't have one at the time.

MRR: Hmm, so how would you describe "mod" than? In the US, our concept of "mod" is pretty ill-defined.
Good street music, music that is close to the reality of the streets outside. Many bands have done this and from all genres it's not just a scooter and flag thing to me because that belonged to the early '60s movement and I can understand revivalism happening in the late '70s with the Jam and then the late '80s with the Stone Roses and Oasis but not anymore. To me, it's more sociological, political even, now but remaining true to the current state of the street and it's gruelling realism.

MRR: What do you think is important for people, particularly new listeners who have just been introduced to your band, to know about Sleaford Mods?
It's angry music, unapologetic and new. It covers things you know about but keep in silent areas within. People relate to it because it's universal, our lives are all governed by routine and work.

MRR: Absolutely. You both live in Nottingham, I believe. Can you tell me about that city and where you're from?
Nottingham is our adopted city—it's the nearest big city apart from Lincoln or whatever. We both moved there years back to do music. It's cheaper than London but still offers something. I'm from Grantham, a small medieval market town about 27 miles from Nottingham and Andrew is from just outside of Lincoln.

MRR: Are there a lot of other bands in Nottingham? Is it like a music hub?
It's no different to any other city really. It has scene, as much as people would deny that. By scene I mean a core of musicians who think they deserve to be famous and act in such a way but at the same time they do nothing.

MRR: Let's talk about your music. It's propulsive and invigorating. It's challenging, but straightforward and uncluttered at the same time. It's incredibly unique. How do you create your songs? Is the music written first, and then vocals added, or is music written for specific vocal ideas?
I do the lyrics and Andrew does the music then we bring it together and throw it at each other. Most of the time that works straight away.

MRR: So that allows you to be pretty prolific, I guess, if everything just clicks. Do you feel prolific? Do you ever get writer's block?
Not yet. I kind of run out of ideas straight after an album's done. It takes about three or four months to start getting new angles. Andrew's constantly writing music—he has boundless supplies of it. Yes, we feel prolific at the minute—it's just coming out every hole to be honest.

MRR: A lot of your lyrics seem regionally specific. How do you approach your lyric writing?
I try to describe stuff in a different way, laced with local lingo and crap comedy. Sometimes it's waffle and sometimes it's straightforward but it has to demonstrate the frustration and indifference with the things that make me feel like that. The badly laced up shoes in life are far better than the gleaming fucking prom shoes, if you know what I mean. I like to focus on the rot because I truly believe that is far more domineering as regards people's lives than the positives. Obviously just because misery is the more dominant theme in existence doesn't mean you have promote it further but I think we explore it in a true light. We expose its nature and because of that I think it's a positive almost.

MRR: So I have to ask, what does "waffle" mean?
Nonsense or a constant feed of uninteresting information.

MRR: It looks like you're going to be playing a show with Steve Ignorant, former singer of Crass. Do you relate to Crass musically? Politically?
Yeah, especially to Steve's lyrics. He has the common man anger which is evident in our stuff. I only got into Crass last year and that's what's stuck out.

MRR: Did you personally ask Steve Ignorant to play with you? How did that come about?
We heard that he liked Sleaford Mods so we got in touch and tried to get a date together. It took a while as he's busy like us but in the end we got there. Lovely bloke and his band were great to.

MRR: What do you think of anarchy as a political ideology? (The B-side to "Tied Up In Nottz" is "Fear Of Anarchy.") Crass was clearly politics first, music second; the music served the purpose of disseminating the political message. Are you using your music to convey a political message?
I'm not sure we are intentionally—it just comes out like that because you just cannot ignore the absolute bollocks going on in government at the moment or with advanced capitalism.

MRR: What do you mean by "advanced capitalism"?
Well, capitalism is, so it's said, in its last stages. It's moved through the idea of "family" of unit conformity and has realized people are now changing their behavior patterns and ideals to the point where its influence has to change. This is partly due to the neoliberalism ushered in by Thatcher/Reagan—the idea of "self"—so consumerism changed from family attainments and branched out into a more personal oppression. The idea of "self," of the individual, has promoted all kinds of ego-orientated options that consumerism can adapt to and keep us down with. Personal grooming, happiness through health, fashion etc. People are getting fucked off though—these things are not enough nor are they natural. Combined with this is the ultra greed that has risen along with right wing politics. Massive amounts of money are now courted by people who have used capitalism in an advanced method by controlling more than they should and extracting unearned profit. It's coming to an end in this form. I think in these advanced stages, the gap between rich and poor is too big and I think that will cause an end to this current form of control eventually, through resistance and war. It may adapt as it does but who knows. I'd like an end to money—it's just a hamsters wheel.

MRR: Do you consider yourselves political artists?
A bit, I suppose.

MRR: So does your music bend to your politics or do your politics bend to your music?
Whatever works for the song, so I guess the music is first. It has to groove.

MRR: Right on. I know you've picked several small labels in Europe to release singles, and now have a pretty small record label from Arizona, Emotional Response, releasing a single for you in the US. (The label is run by Jen Turrell and Stewart Anderson, who have been playing in indie pop, punk and mod bands since the early '90s.) It seems an interesting approach to involve yourselves with many smaller labels, and spreading yourselves into different scenes and genres. Is this a deliberate way to remain involved at a basic DIY level, or a happy accident?
It's easier to deal with independent labels (mostly) you don't have contracts or any of that bollocks and it's a quick and easy affair.

MRR: This interview is for a DIY punk magazine. Do you consider Sleaford Mods to be punk?
A bit I suppose. It's aggro music definitely. [*laughter*]

MRR: Do you relate to the term "do-it-yourself"?
Yes, of course. This whole project was built on DIY norms.

MRR: Your Emotional Response single sold out in a week and had to be repressed. Your last album charted in the UK Top Ten. Does it become harder to stay DIY as you become more commercially successful?
Did it chart? I don't think it did. The bigger you get, the harder it gets to keep it all in house because we haven't got direct access to bigger venues or booking agents. It gets to a point where you need to liaise with the machine a bit.

MRR: I suppose you would, I assume it can be overwhelming. Where did the B-side song of your single for Emotional Response come from? It features an additional vocalist, John Paul, who has also guested on some of your other releases. Who is he?
John's a mate. He's a plumber by trade but has always been into the idea of singing so I invited him along years ago and we recorded "Urine Mate Welcome to the Club." He's doing his own 7" on Emotional Response very soon.

MRR: I have to ask, in your lyrics and in interviews you use the word "cunt" a lot. My English friend tells me this is in much more common usage in the UK than in the US. In the US it is considered extremely offensive, particularly by feminists. Do you have any comment on this?
Well, we certainly aren't misogynistic. The word "cunt" in England is widely used and conveys contempt.

MRR: Are you concerned with being misunderstood?
No.

MRR: I see there is a lyric sheet with your US single. And you're going on a European tour shortly. Some of your lyrics refer to touring as "lonely" and "fuckin' boring," so that's kind of ominous. Are you looking forward to the trip?
Yes, we like Europe. It's not as oppressive as the UK. The people are more respectful and open minded in some senses. I'm English and I know that most of the time I'm dismissive and negative when it comes to other bands. From my experience, most are in England.

MRR: So while I was preparing for this interview, I was watching one of your videos on my computer, for the song "McFlurry" and I asked one of my sons who was with me—he's seven—what he would ask you if he could. He said, "Ask them why they smell so bad!" Seconds later, in the video, you said "You smell!" It was uncanny. There was some psychic connection. Do you have any comment on that?
Yeah, we smell alright!

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COLUMN OF HEAVEN

INTERVIEW BY JASON BROWNSTEIN
PHOTOS BY REID HAITHCOCK

Column of Heaven started off as a recording project in the wake of The Endless Blockade and Slaughter Strike. Initially confined to the Toronto city limits, fortunately for us they have since decided to play shows and tour now and then. As a band their approach is refreshingly principled, while still managing to maintain an air of open-mindedness. If you believe that thoughtfulness, intentionality, engagement and awareness are virtues within the context of punk/hardcore then they have earned your time. If that isn't up your alley, you can take this conversation as the musings of a punishingly brutal band with a lot to say. The majority of this interview was conducted with the bassist Andrew Nolan from Column of Heaven and one question was fielded by vocalist Dave Kristiansen.

MRR: HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN LIVING IN TORONTO? IS THERE AN ELEMENT OF TORONTO'S CULTURE OR HISTORY THAT HAS MADE ITS WAY INTO YOUR SOUND OR YOUR LYRICS?

I came here from the UK almost 12 years ago and I think it's impossible for your surroundings not to influence your music in some form or another.

I live in an area that's on the cusp of old money, old poverty, new gentrification, and heavy industry. You can rarely see the stars in this city due to light pollution, but there's one spot near where I live that I take my dog to every night before bed that is next to the rail tracks and has a clear view of the night sky.

There is most definitely [something] to be found in our music that is comparable to standing by the railway tracks at night, near the factories, being able to see the stars whilst playing with a dog, and inhaling the cancerous fumes of the nearby rubber factory the whole time. Black metal in the forests and mountains we are not.

MRR: THE LAST COUPLE TIMES I'VE BEEN IN TORONTO AT HARDCORE SHOWS, I'VE NOTICED A LOT MORE YOUNGER KIDS—AND OF THOSE YOUNG KIDS, A LOT OF THEM ARE GENDERQUEER. IS THERE SOMETHING ABOUT THE CITY OR THE SCENE THAT FOSTERS THAT KIND OF COMMUNITY IN HARDCORE? ARE THERE CLEAR DIVIDES AT TORONTO'S HARDCORE SHOWS WHERE THAT KIND OF YOUTH PRESENCE ISN'T AROUND?

The presence of a strong audience comes and goes in this city. I think that there's a correlation between holding shows in more autonomous spaces, rather than in bars, that tends to bring out a younger, more diverse crowd. Sometimes this city goes through valleys regarding venue options and in those times it looks a lot less like it does the times you've been here.

As you observe, there is a noticeable contingent of non-heteronormative and non-gender binary kids at shows in Toronto these days. On the infrequent occasions when we book shows we try and have bills that are more representative of the audiences that tend to come out here. Our reasoning is that people are more likely to be involved in something if they see themselves somehow reflected in it and in general it's easier to get shit done with a larger, more active, self-sustaining local scene than one that is the same five faces doing everything.

Rather than tokenizing difference as proof of how politically enlightened we are we prefer to take the approach of silently normalizing things by recognizing difference and including it, or just by visibly supporting things that are important. This is the approach of all of the people we respect in the scene here; you work for inclusion, if you aren't part of the community you're trying to include you do it respectfully and don't speak on other people's behalf.

I don't want to be the straight white guy making sweeping pronouncements in this part, but it is more diverse here than it is in a lot of places, and as a band we openly encourage and welcome those cast off as social deviants—whether you embrace the label or not—at our shows. That is not to say things are perfect, because we are well aware that they are not.

MRR: WHAT IS LIKE LIVING IN TORONTO? I'VE HEARD THAT IT IS AN EXPENSIVE CITY. A LOT OF PEOPLE IN TORONTO THAT ARE ACTIVE IN DIY/PUNK/HARDCORE I KNOW HAVE SERIOUS FULL-TIME JOBS OR GO TO SCHOOL. HOW IS THAT ECONOMIC SITUATION REFLECTED IN THE PUNK SCENE?

It is expensive here, though undoubtedly less expensive than New York, San Francisco, or London. Isn't the entire global scene built on the backs of people just trying to get by? Of touring bands whose members are frequently moving from one precarious service industry job to the next?

The economics of the global punk and hardcore world rests almost entirely on the shoulders of hobbyists who are essentially Trekkies that have replaced SciFi conventions with fests and first press Finnish hardcore records. Of stamp collectors that need every single colour of the new Full of Hell record, every Column of Heaven cassette, or every Iron Lung shirt.

Shows here are a mix of queer high school kids drunk on their parents sherry that have never heard of your band but will mosh themselves into a glittery frenzy as soon as you turn your amp on, old guys that will silently buy your merch and shake your hand at the end of the night, extremely literate early twenty-something hardcore historians, crusties with smart phones, bewildered brutal metal fans, and every shade between those various poles.

No one can afford where they live, everyone hates their job, rehearsal spaces are getting harder and harder to find, venues get turned into condos, and the Toronto punk scene is surprisingly resilient in the face of all of this.

MRR: MUSICALLY SPEAKING, COLUMN OF HEAVEN HAS A LOT OF DISPARATE INFLUENCES. DO YOU FIND ANY BENEFIT IN IDENTIFYING YOUR BAND WITH A SPECIFIC GENRE?

I like the boundaries that a genre provides, and I appreciate a band that can exist within those boundaries, but still push against them and make their own identity; bands like Gas Chamber, Iron Lung, Man is the Bastard, G-Anx, Dawn of Humans, Dead Kennedys, Antisect, and so on. I can also appreciate a band that is fully aware of those genre restrictions and understands the benefit in not pushing them and remaining focused on the center; like Boston Strangler, Insect Warfare, DiE, Career Suicide, Disclose, and so on.

As far as Column of Heaven is concerned, I just describe us as grindcore. I'm done the whole powerviolence tag to be honest and calling ourselves grindcore opens our options a lot more.

In an age where no one is making any money out of music (I say this acknowledging that some established musicians make money, but it's basically worse than minimum wage on a zero hour contract), anyone can hear your band, and both positive and negative critiques have been reduced to utterly inane hyperbole—rendering the reviewer largely irrelevant—there are no excuses for musicians not to be utterly obsessed with their craft and just do whatever the hell they want. This is an era where the word "experimental," when applied to music, is without meaning.

MRR: WHAT KIND OF MUSIC DID YOU ALL GROW UP WITH? DID YOUR PARENTS PLAY MUSIC?

I come from a musical family and wasn't encouraged in the slightest. In my late teens I just bought myself a bass and taught myself to play. I also saved up money to buy an analog synthesizer (Roland SH101)

I LIKE THE BOUNDARIES THAT A GENRE PROVIDES, AND I APPRECIATE A BAND THAT CAN EXIST WITHIN THOSE BOUNDARIES, BUT STILL PUSH AGAINST THEM AND MAKE THEIR OWN IDENTITY...

and discovered the joys of non-musical sound exploration, or noise if you will.

The only relevancy of my having a musical family on the present is that I learned how to make noise by inheriting/taking old, obsolete, and frequently broken pieces of equipment and experimenting with them. I spent many an hour making an ancient Fostex four-track recorder feedback on itself and recording the results.

MRR: I DON'T KNOW A LOT ABOUT YOUR ZINE *Chromium Dioxide*. WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT? HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN DOING IT?

Dave: *Chromium Dioxide* is a print-only zine that I write and edit along with my partner Phil who also illustrates every issue by hand. It's a celebration of obscure heavy metal, genre films, and growing up as a hopeless nitwit obsessed with the shittier things in life. Think of the mutated, secretly captive child of *Fangoria*, *MAD*, and obscure old metal zines and you're on the right trail. Consult your local internet for more info…if you dare.

MRR: WOULD YOU DESCRIBE *Mission From God* AS A CONCEPT ALBUM? WITHOUT TRYING TO TEASE OUT ANY OF THE MEANING, CAN YOU EXPAND ON THE THINKING BEHIND THAT? IS THERE A DIFFERENCE WRITING WITH A THEME AND WRITING WITH A CONCEPT IN MIND?

It has a running theme—if that makes it a concept album so be it. For anyone new to the band (and if you're not, just skip this, you've heard it many times before), the album is inspired by growing up in the shadow of a serial killer (Peter Sutcliffe), and the effect on the political and physical landscape and how that impacts the people in those landscapes. Irene Richardson was murdered at Soldier's Field less than a mile away from my house when I was four years old. Jayne MacDonald and Jacqueline Hill were also killed relatively close to where I lived/spaces that were important to me growing up.

It's definitely not a celebration of Sutcliffe, it's not a memorial to his victims either; it's more a meditation of the shitty things people just accept as being a normal part of life and how this acceptance then alters life.

Or it's just a lo-fi grindcore record with some blast parts and noise segments [raises the horns and falls over]. You choose.

I find I'm more focused when I have a theme to guide things, both in terms of what we want to convey—all these 60 second long songs don't add up to that much after a point—and musically as a guide to what the record is "allowed" to do by making a set of rules for each release, which is how I've worked for a long time now.

MRR: HAS DAVID PEACE HEARD THE RECORD? WHAT DOES HE THINK?

No, I keep meaning to contact his agent and send him a copy. He lists The Stalin and S.O.B. as bands he was listening to whilst writing one of the books in the Tokyo Trilogy, so we're probably not *that* far out of his comfort zone.

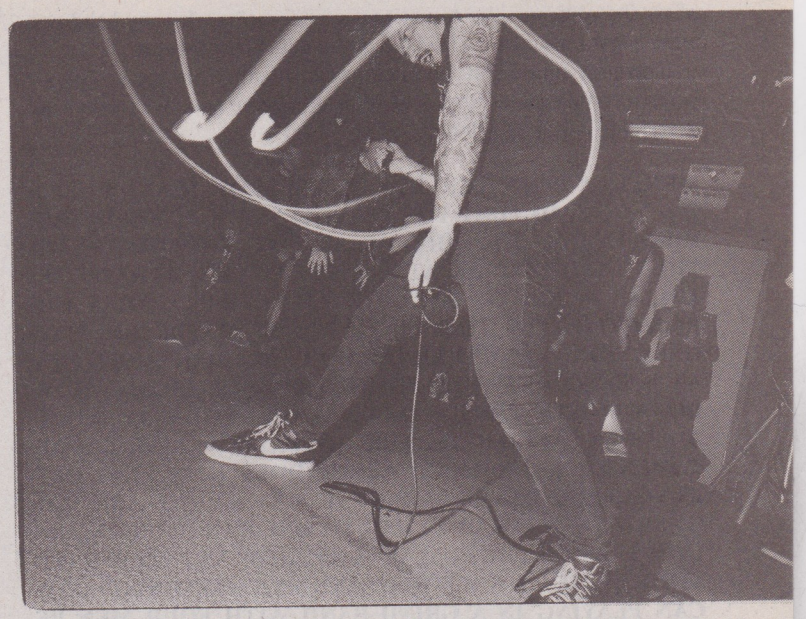
I tried—and failed—to send a copy to Dennis Cooper. Brett Easton Ellis has a copy of the Shank record with the song Patrick Bateman on it.

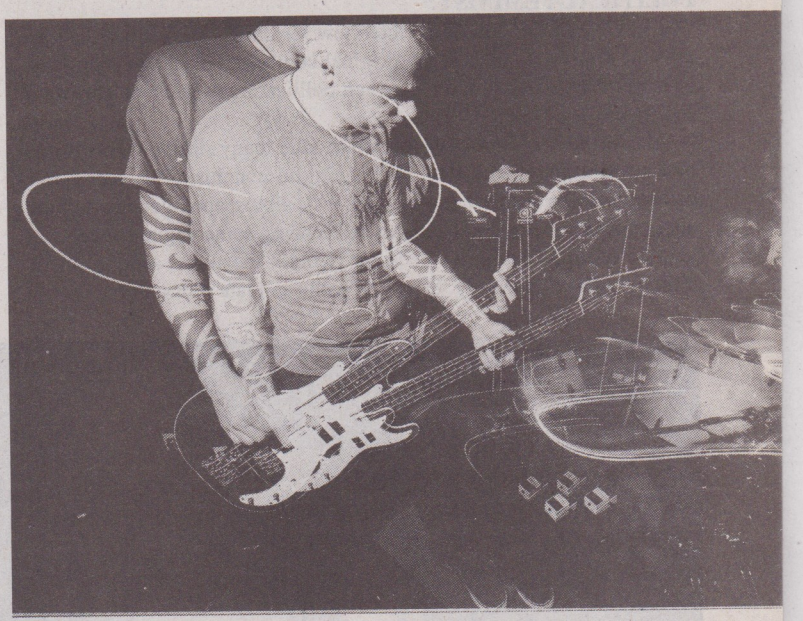
MRR: DO YOU HAVE A GO-TO METHOD FOR RECORDING?

We record everything ourselves and won't use studios or other people in that process at all, other than in the mastering, which I prefer to have outsiders take care of.

The process is fairly guerilla, a rough and ready set up in our practice space to get the basic tracking done, overdubs done in my house, or wherever. Lots of short cuts, lots of things that "serious" home recorders would frown upon, lots of just making do with the best we can manage.

I'm not romantic about analog purity; digital recording and the increasing affordability/pirateability, and portability of technology have saved DIY. I told myself a few years ago that from now on instead





of paying someone else to not accurately capture what my band was aiming for; I would not accurately capture it myself for free.

There's a split LP at the plant and one split 7" in the process of being recorded and another split 7" being written now. We self-release everything on cassette first.

MRR: IN A 2014 INTERVIEW IN THE SLOVAKIAN ZINE *Zin Taer* YOU SAID THAT YOU SEE A TENSION IN HARDCORE IDEOLOGIES. TO PARAPHRASE: ON THE ONE HAND THERE ARE BANDS THAT ARE IDENTIFYING AS RADICAL/ POLITICAL AND ON THE OTHER HAND BANDS THAT ARE REJECTING POLITICS IN FAVOR OF MAYBE KEEPING HARDCORE INDIFFERENT. HOW DO YOU IDENTIFY AS A BAND BETWEEN THESE TWO PARADIGMS? HOW DO IDENTIFY PERSONALLY? IN RELATION TO YOUR ANSWER EARLIER IN THIS INTERVIEW ABOUT NOT-TOKENIZING DIFFERENCE HOW DOES THAT PLAY OUT IN YOUR BAND? COLUMN OF HEAVEN LYRICS ARE NOT OVERTLY POLITICIZED, AND NO ONE CAN DISCERN THE LYRICS WHEN YOU PLAY LIVE ANYHOW, YET YOUR BAND STRIKES ME AS POLITICAL AND EVEN FEMINIST. HOW CAN PLAYING IN A GRIND BAND WITH FOUR MEN BE POLITICAL/FEMINIST?

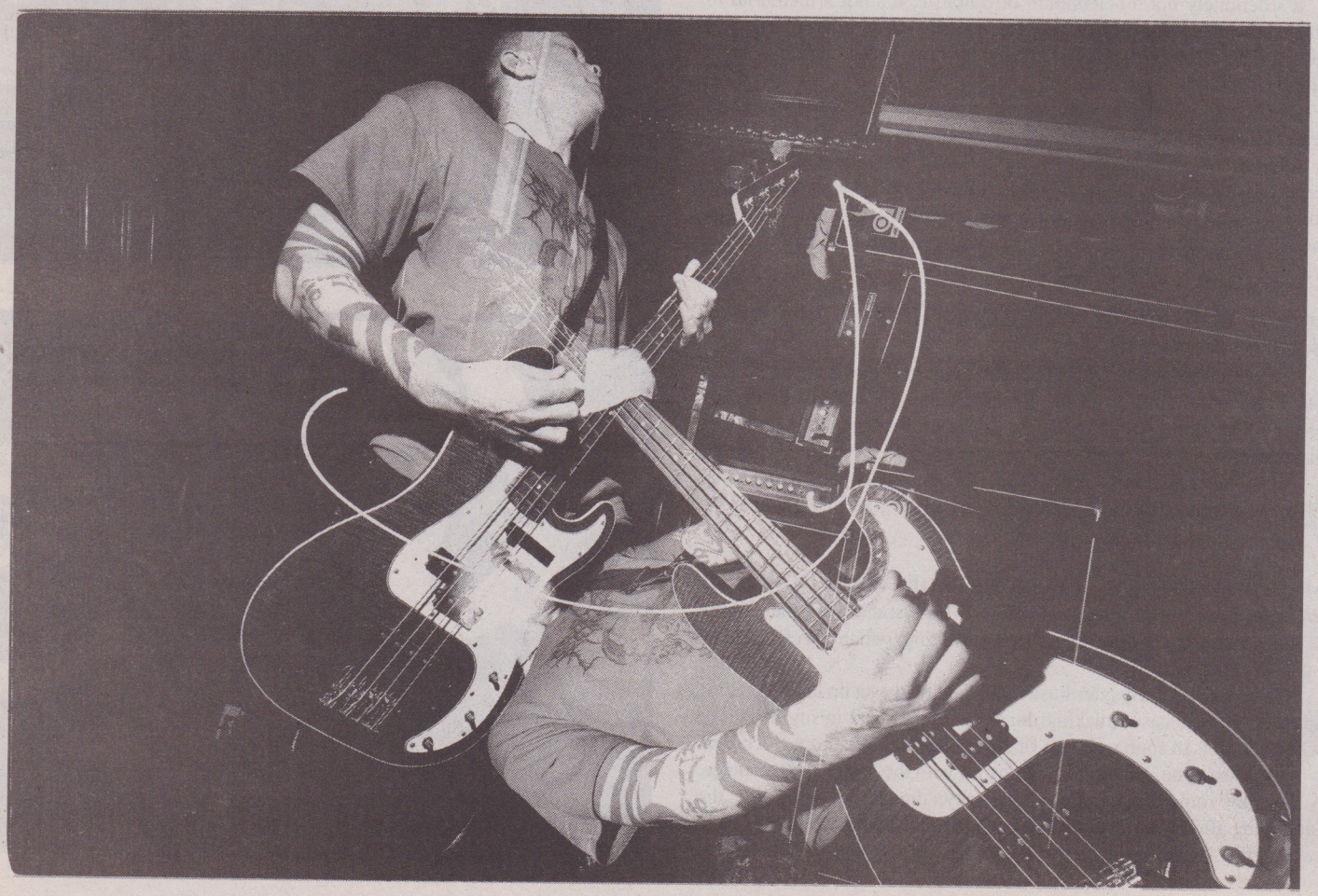
The English translation of the interview for *Zin Taer* is on our blog for anyone who wants to read my original comments re: the tension I see in North American hardcore between politicizing music and keeping it indifferent.

The answer to your question could take many different forms and never really get to any kind of meaningful conclusion. It seems like we've reached a stage where you have to be almost apologetic for talking about political beliefs or even just referencing some vague concepts of generic fairness/non shitty behavior. I think the worst aspects of the political sides of the early '80s punk scene and late '90s hardcore scene need to shoulder at least some of the responsibility for people's lack of time for political music. There have been so many utterly awful political statements and stances by bands that were well-meaning, but ultimately shallow and signified nothing beyond sidestepping personal guilt that over the years many people have become instantly skeptical of a lot of message-based music. The primary function of any band is to not suck at what they're doing, get that right first.

Regarding the feminist question, I would be very surprised if all four members of this band did not identify with some form of feminist political persuasion or another. We're also more than aware that as males we do not get to set the rules and if someone feels that men cannot be feminists, we're not going to argue, we'll say we're supportive of feminist politics. We don't need to take on the title of feminists.

As far as this band being considered feminist I think that's an entirely different proposition altogether and I will say that Column of Heaven is not a feminist band. You have to question what it means when four men state that the band they are in is a feminist entity. Is it a get out clause? "Hey, we're a feminist band; therefore we don't need to be held accountable for this dumb thing we did that we're being called on." Is it some weird marketing approach? "Buy our records, we're feminists, it's ok, we understand how things are. Column of Heaven: FFO Drop Dead, Mortician, Feminism, Fair Trade Coffee, Excruciating Terror, Knuckle Tattoos, Secretly Owning Racist Black Metal Records, and Converge."

Some of the most egregious examples of colonialist garbage are found in white people's attempts to position themselves as somehow representing a more caring, more tolerant, less replicating of oppressive structures through their art, music, low grade spirituality etc. In the same vein I wouldn't want to cheapen something that's very real and very important by attaching it to our scary music band where four guys beat our chests and yell and break things. I think the only thing served by calling your four white dudes in a grindcore band a feminist band is invalidating feminism and creating more commodities out of ideas. The worst thing about veganism is when it's a commodity. The worst thing



about straightedge is when it's a commodity (and the best thing is that it's an antidote to this idea that fun only looks like getting fucked up and it opens up alternatives to young people that don't feel like getting stuck in that cycle of enforced fun and partying). The worst thing about any idea is when it just becomes something to further a product it's tenuously linked to and let us not fool ourselves, music is very much a product in a producer/consumer relationship, and in underground music we dress it up in fancy ideological clothes to tell ourselves otherwise.

Feminism is not served by being a sales point on an entirely marginal grindcore band's résumé.

There is another side to this I could argue, but I'll just deal with it quickly. There is definitely a case to be made for positioning your band as being representative of certain ideologies if the goal is to reshape a cultural norm, but that can be a tricky tactic.

If your band is in a country/scene where there is a lot of legitimate fascist activity (I don't just mean less than 30 crappy black metal bands with an ill thought-out Julius Evola reference buried in their back catalogue), it can make sense to declare yourselves as anti-fascists. If you're Column of Heaven in safe old contemporary Toronto, there's not that much to be gained by declaring yourselves Anti-Fascist Grindcore outside of marketing possibilities.

MRR: INITIALLY IT SEEMED LIKE COLUMN OF HEAVEN WAS GOING TO BE MORE OF A POST-ENDLESS BLOCKADE RECORDING PROJECT, BUT NOW YOU HAVE A COUPLE TOURS UNDER YOUR BELT. WHAT HAPPENED?

After the demise of both Endless Blockade and Slaughter Strike (a pre-Column of Heaven death metal band) I decided I had had enough of being in bands where one person could derail the whole process and just wanted to do something that would be Eric and myself and on each recording we would get outsiders to play the parts we couldn't do ourselves. At the time I was pretty disinterested in playing straight hardcore/metal/etc and the idea of doing a band where four people got together once a week, worked out a bunch of songs, played a bunch of shows, then did a bunch of records was utterly unappealing to me.

Obviously this model is pretty much what we are doing right now. Gregg Benedetto (S.H.I.T.) convinced me to play live again, and the addition of Dave on vocals, and now Billy, our newest guitarist, both do a fairly solid job of keeping me grounded. Eric has always done a great job of bringing me back to earth and making me focus on music that everyone else in the band wants to play and isn't just some stupid esoteric jerk-off rampage of mine.

I go through phases of not wanting to deal with any of the trappings of being in a band other than making music I personally find compelling, and bandmates talk sense in to me and make it more of a band experience and not just me with my head in the clouds. I'm a complete control freak (though I'm not even remotely a perfectionist), but having bandmates is something I need and in those not-infrequent moments where I have no desire to deal with the outside world, they both cushion that blow for me and remind me that this band is four people, not one, and not to stick my head in the sand and stop doing things I ultimately enjoy doing just because I'm in a "people make my skin crawl" phase.

MRR: WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PLANS CONCERNING RELEASES/TOURS?

We'll do some more records, we'll play live occasionally. I'm unable to sleep on floors for two week stretches anymore, but we'll tour from time to time.

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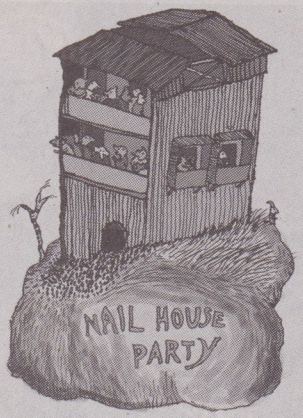

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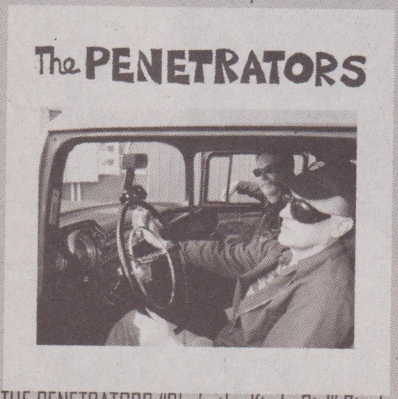

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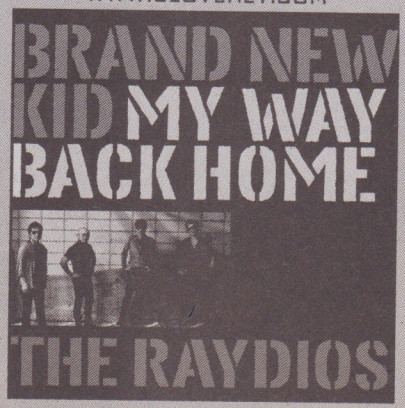

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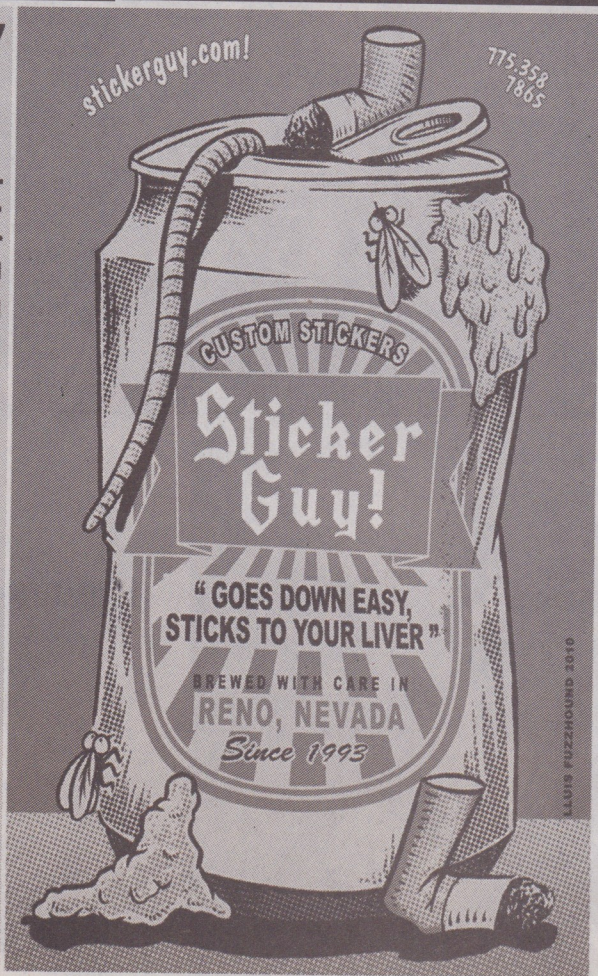

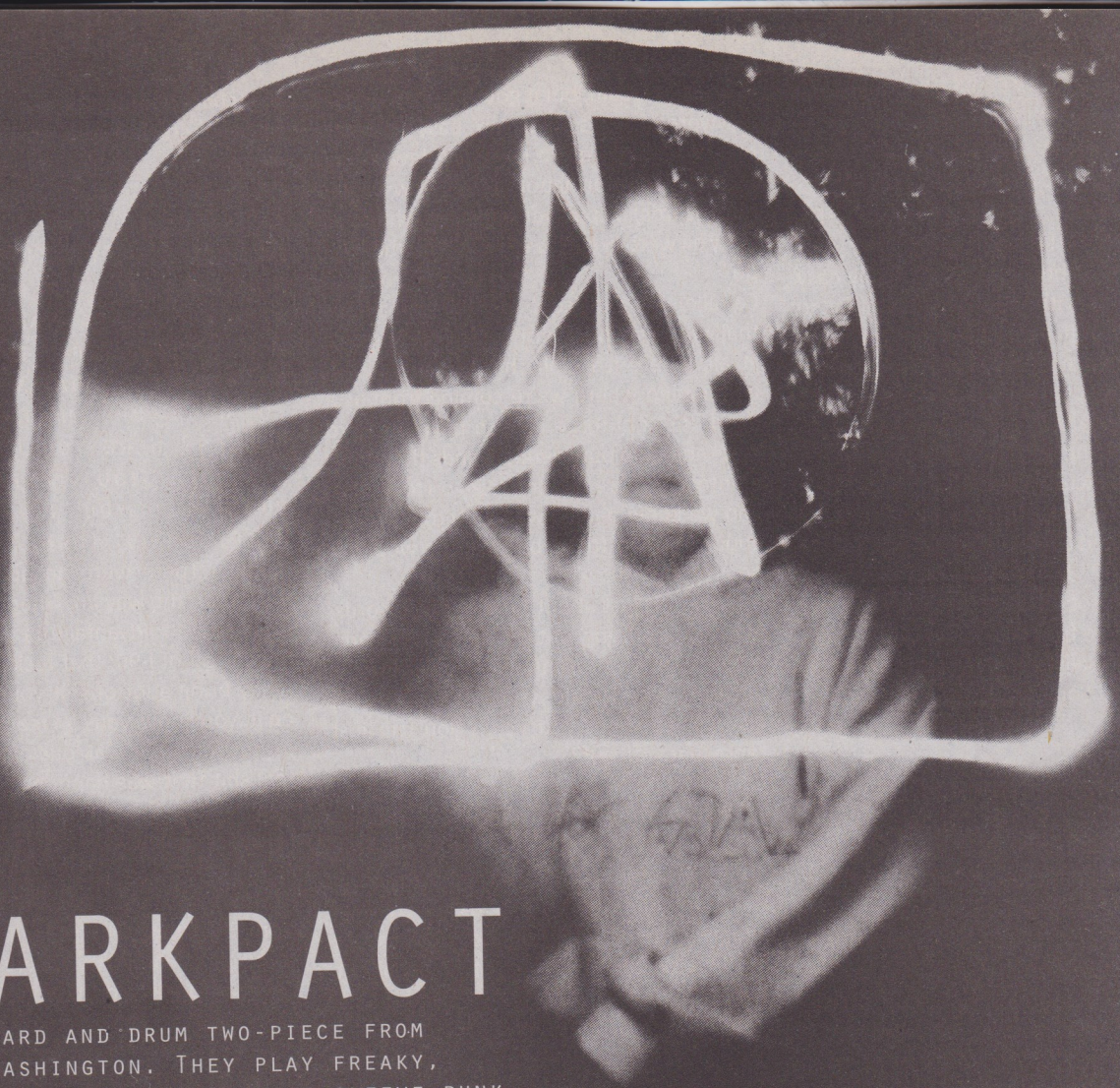

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INTERVIEW & INTRODUCTION BY THANE FAY. PHOTOS BY KEVIN RAINSBERRY.

MRR: HOW DID SHARKPACT START?

Camille: It all began on a cold fall or winter's eve... In the year of two-thousand and...

Together: Ten.

Jeff: Winter.

Camille: Winter.

Jeff: January.

Camille: We realized we had to make a band with just the two of us. Hail Seizures was going on tour and we were gonna drop off Jimmy and Cameron—who are both in that band—in New Orleans. So we were like "How the fuck are we gonna get back without any money? We have to make a band really quick!" We found a piece-of-garbage keyboard under a pile of crap that Scream Club left in the Red House basement. Jeff played drums, and we wrote and recorded like five songs...

Jeff: ...in two weeks.

MRR: HOW DID THAT TOUR BACK GO, HAVING BEEN A BAND FOR TWO WEEKS?

Jeff: Very bad.

Camille: Very bad.

Jeff: We played, like—

Camille: Five or six shows—

Jeff: Because of being in Hail Seizures, people knew who we were and booked our shows, just 'cuz we were like, "We're also in this band, will you just do us a favor, even though you've never heard us?" The main reason it sucked is that Camille and I were fighting the whole time. I was being a dick. We were like hardly friends at that point anymore because we had dated for a long time and then broken up. And I was like, pretty insensitive about the whole thing.

Camille: True.

[Laughter]

MRR: Y'all have been playing music with each other for years—what's it like to have your creative process be so tied up with another person's for so long?

Camille: Easy. It becomes really, really easy to write music with the same person for so many years. Jeff and I have been writing songs together since 2006. It's just become a very easy-peasy situation. It's very intuitive, it makes a lot of sense.

Jeff: And coming up with subject matter is never that difficult because there's hardly a time when I'm like, "I wanna write a song about this," and Camille's like "What are you talking about?" It's always just, "Of course we'd write a song about that." Being such close long-time friends and living in a small town, it's usually something we're both dealing with. Something sad, depressing, complicated.

MRR: How do you usually write songs?

Camille: Usually Jeff has a song that he wrote on the guitar, and is like, "Yo, I got a new song." He'll teach me it and then we kinda tweak it a little bit. If he hasn't written lyrics, we'll write them together, but for the most part Jeff does a lot of the main bones of the songwriting.

The last time we recorded, when we recorded *Run*, we needed to bust out some songs really quick. They happened very fast. It all just comes together for the most part. The same day that we're recording vocals we'll be like, "Shit, we need to write lyrics!" But it always ends up being like, great, that was crazy how fast that happened.

Jeff: A lot of the really interesting shit, as far as vocal melodies and interesting chord changes and minor chords is all Camille.

MRR: You also started a record label together, Ditches—how did that happen and what were your goals for it?

Jeff: We started the record label because nobody would ever put out anything of ours. *[Laughs]* Or people would, but it got to a point where we were like, it's so fuckin' easy to figure out how to put out a record. A few of our friends had information about how to put out records, or put out tapes, or whatever. They all were like, "It's easy, this is what you do."

Camille: It's also cool for being in bands that are very much not in a specific genre at all, where it's really hard for people to understand where we're coming from as a band. It's cool to be able to have a record label and help our friends' bands that don't fit into any genre either. We go on tour a lot, and we know people who would be stoked about hearing these bands they wouldn't hear otherwise.

Jeff: It's not just about putting out records, it's about putting out all of your friends' records andrepresenting a community, because why would you want someone else to represent you when you can just represent yourself?

Camille: Bam.

Jeff: One other thing about the Ditches thing is that that the concept of making a bunch of money or profiting from punk is fuckin' uninteresting to us as creative people. There's no financial interest in having a record label, it's just purely about supporting one another's bands and supporting our friends' projects.

MRR: How did you come up with the name Ditches? Where did that come from?

Camille: It was a song that I wrote for SHARKPACT on our first album, which was also called *Ditches*. It's a song about getting stuck in that weird place in your mind that is kind of like a ditch that collects all this crap. It's mainly about this irrigation ditch behind my house growing up, and visualizing that and seeing that change through seasons. That emotion of being stuck in that thing that we're all stuck in.

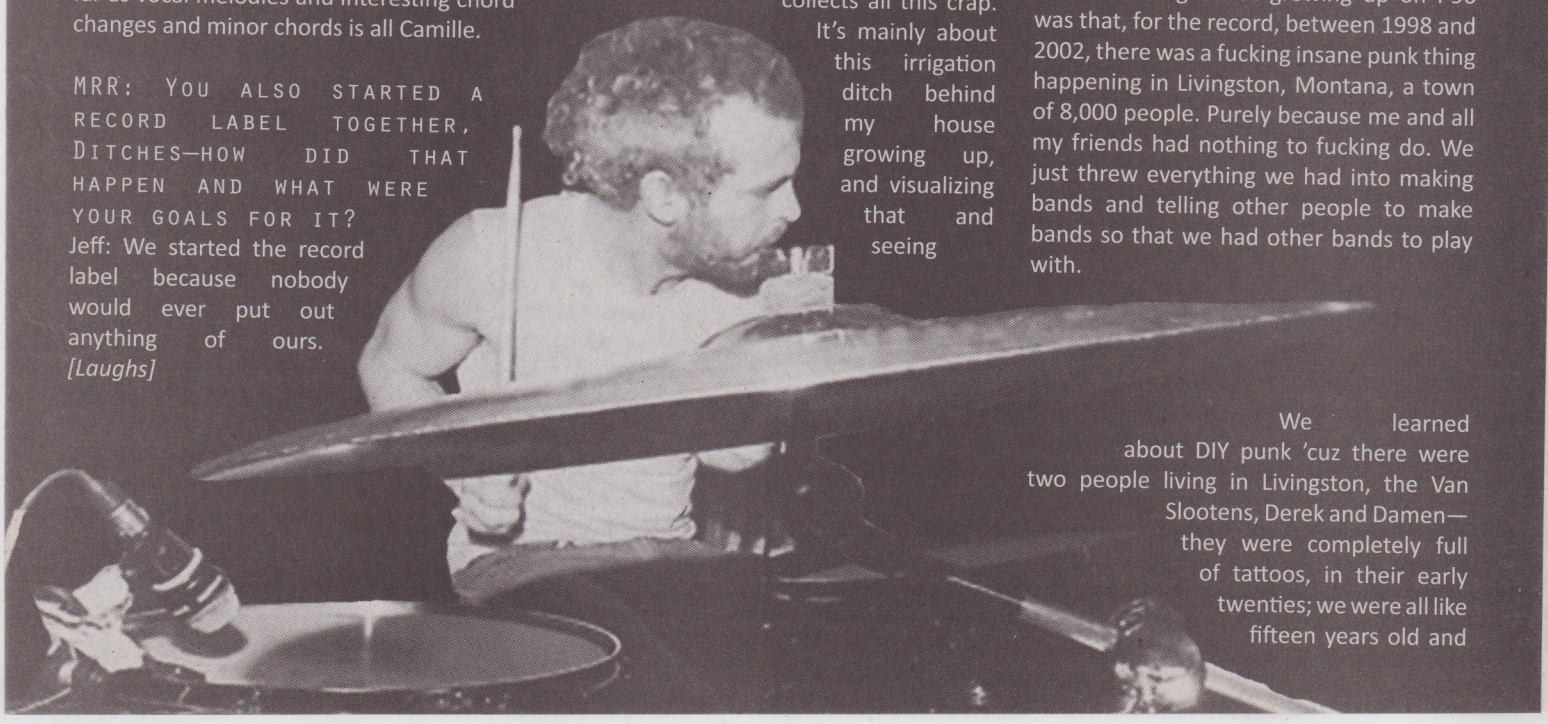
MRR: You said irrigation ditch, so, 'cuz I grew up in Montana, and Jeff, you grew up in Montana, and Camille, you grew up in Yakima, Washington: what was it like to grow up in these rural places? Were you punks then? How did you interact with punk when you were teens in weird small towns?

Camille: There were no punks in Yakima. It's not on the way anywhere. I feel like Jeff even had an advantage in a way, because he was off of I-90; that fuckin' freeway can really bring a lot of shit your way if you're on it, you know, you can reach out and grab it. But for me it was out of my grasp, any real shit that was happening or any actual punk.

I used to go to a lot of shows that were "punk shows" or "rock shows" in all-ages spaces in Yakima that were from the kids from Ellensburg, the college town—they'd come down and play. There was a lot of Christian punk and Christian music. It was like, "Oh sick, this fuckin' band's gonna play, awesome!" and then I would read the lyrics, and, fresh outta Catholic school, would be like, "Wait a minute, this fuckin' sucks, I fuckin' hate this band!" I didn't really get into punk until I started playing in a punk band.

MRR: What about growing up in Livingston, Jeff?

Jeff: The thing about growing up on I-90 was that, for the record, between 1998 and 2002, there was a fucking insane punk thing happening in Livingston, Montana, a town of 8,000 people. Purely because me and all my friends had nothing to fucking do. We just threw everything we had into making bands and telling other people to make bands so that we had other bands to play with.



We learned about DIY punk 'cuz there were two people living in Livingston, the Van Slootens, Derek and Damen—they were completely full of tattoos, in their early twenties; we were all like fifteen years old and

we thought they were the coolest fuckin' thing ever because they had knuckle tattoos and were in a band called Switch 247, a.k.a. STFS. They lived in our tiny town with their mom but toured the country as a punk band. This blew our minds. They were the ones who took us under their wing, and were like, "You guys can do this! Just learn how to play an instrument—this is what a PA is, this is what a microphone is, this is what a show is. It can be in a basement, it can be in a fuckin' park, it can be anything you want, and as long as you and ten of your friends are there it's a punk show." That changed everything for us.

MRR: ON THE DITCHES "REVIEWS" PAGE YOU HAVE THIS QUOTE FROM A COMMENTER ON PUNKNEWS.ORG THAT'S LIKE, "WHO DO THEY THINK THEY ARE? PRINCE RAMA? ALSO, THIS IS A GREAT BAND TO SEE IF YOU WANT TO HEAR TWO PEOPLE RAMBLE INCOHERENTLY ABOUT POVERTY, PRIVILEGE, AND THE PATRIARCHY FOR ABOUT FIVE MINUTES BETWEEN EVERY SONG." ANYTHING TO SAY ABOUT THAT?

Camille: Number one, fuck PunkNews. That was the first time I ever looked at it, because someone told us, like, "Dude, your album got reviewed on PunkNews!" and we were like, oh cool, let's check it out! And I was like, what even is this thing? Who looks at this stupid page? It's seemingly like a few fuckin' dorks who don't have anything else to do but be on the internet talking about what is punk to them.

Jeff: Who's Prince Rama, though?

MRR: I LOOKED THEM UP ON YOUTUBE—THE THING I FOUND WAS LIKE A NEW AGE KEYBOARD SPACE OPERA? I THINK YOU'D ACTUALLY REALLY LIKE IT.

[Laughter]

Camille: It's just funny because, yeah, shut the fuck up and do something else. Go do something, get off your fucking computer.

Jeff: It's hilarious to me that that person was so worked up over the fact that we talk about stuff that they took the time to post about it. I mean, also, guilty as charged, we do talk a lot between songs.

Camille: True.

MRR: Y'ALL WERE SOME OF THE FIRST PEOPLE I MET IN OLYMPIA WHO WERE REALLY OUTSPOKEN ABOUT THE WAYS THAT CLASS PLAYS OUT IN PUNK—DO YOU WANNA TALK ABOUT THAT AT ALL, HOW IT AFFECTS THE WAY YOU SEE PUNK AND YOUR LIFE IN GENERAL?

Camille: For us, it's kinda a thing where we are just generally annoyed with bands that aren't talking about anything that is important in the broader scheme, politically. It's like, "What is this band even about?" There've been a lot of bands who are like, "There's no reason why politics should be a part of playing in a band. There's no room for politics in our artistic expression at all," and it seems like a pretty stupid thing to say. The reason why most art and music was made is political, because people were reacting to a broader struggle. It's weird to me when people are all like, "I'm just a rocker, I just fuckin' play music."

Jeff: Punk and anarchism is a strange place, and a lot of people involved with these subcultures in the United States didn't necessarily grow up in poverty, or their parents weren't working-class alcoholics, or their cars weren't completely fuckin' broken down, or their electricity never got shut off in the middle of winter in Montana. A lot of the punk and anarchist subculture wears poverty and class struggle as, like, a badge of honor, while maybe not necessarily having experienced what being actually poor is like...not as a lifestyle choice, but as a life-reality with tangible consequences. That being said, some of me and Camille's best friends come from wealthy families. They just know how to handle their privilege, and for the most part aren't all fucking weird about it.

This shit comes up a bunch in our songs, but I think the best line is in "New Narrative": *Crooked teeth won't grow straight, it's alright, chew up the rich, take time and digest it, damn shame and embarrassment, a losing hand can be a fucking gift.* It's like, a positive view of having a poor class background.

So the longer we choose to live this way, as anarchists, artists, and wingnuts, and the more we want to do this the rest of our lives, we have to struggle really hard to figure out how to make it work. A lot of folks who have family wealth don't even realize they have it, because they never even needed to talk about it cause they don't need to think about scarcity. But I think about scarcity every fuckin' day and I think Camille does too. In the end it's kinda okay though, 'cuz it forces us to always look at life creatively, to scheme, and to be thankful for anything we got.

Camille: Yeah. True.

MRR: SO YOU SORT OF STARTED TALKING ABOUT FAMILY—THERE'S THIS THEME IN PUNK, YOU KNOW, "PARENTS, WHY DON'T THEY SHUT UP, PARENTS, THEY'RE SO FUCKED UP." BUT IT SEEMS LIKE FOR BOTH OF YOU, YOUR FAMILIES AND PARENTS ARE REALLY IMPORTANT TO YOU. HOW HAVE THEY INFLUENCED YOU, HOW DO THEY SHOW UP IN YOUR MUSIC?

Camille: Well, my dad is a person who shows up in my music a lot because he's just kind of an ass. He's like seventy years old and has six other daughters besides me—I'm the youngest—and when I was ten he just, whatever, shrugged me off and that was it. I was kinda like, "Okay, I'm gonna deal with this," but it's totally fucked over my head, even though I know, as I get

older, it's like, "Okay, blah blah blah."
But it still affects me in a crazy way. But also, my entire life, my mom has been my role model. Single mother/only child, me-and-my-mom-best-friends-forever. Definitely number one influence in my life, for being like, "Stick it through, fuck 'em all." When I was a kid going to Catholic school and stuff, with my teachers and classmates being dicks to me, she was always just like, "Camille, fuck 'em all." That was the number one thing she told me as a mom. Just such a badass and has been through so much in her life. Still going through stuff, but the most amazing person in the world, basically. I'm just so lucky to have her be my mom.
Jeff: Camille's mom's a complete badass.

MRR: And a beloved member of the punk scene. *[Laughter]*
Camille: Always coming to the shows—
Jeff: Front row—
Camille: Every time. Just so stoked. I remember one show at the Red House looking at my fucking clock and being like, it's fuckin' 12:30 a.m, my mom is raging in the front row like "Yeahhhhhh!" Rocking out to Meconium who were a totally insane fucking band that made no sense. She's such a huge supporter for everyone in this punk scene and has been for years, it's so cool.
Jeff: My mom is equally an amazing lady. I was lucky enough to grow up in a pretty radical household: lots of books, lots of politics, lots of talking about why the world is so messed up. Lots of conversations about forgiveness and empathy and stuff. My mom's in her 60s, she's just getting her masters in Native American studies, and is just a really special lady.
My dad, he's dead. He died when I was twenty. He died 'cuz he had Hepatitis C and his liver exploded. He was a confusing guy; he was also an extremely special and beautiful person. He shows up a lot in the songs for me. That song "Death," is about him. He experienced a lot of trauma growing up so he didn't want that to be our experience, even though it ended up being our experience anyway...but that's how this shit works. He never finished middle school; he ran away from home, got drafted, dodged the draft by hopping to Canada for a couple years, ended up organizing with SDS in Ann Arbor, Detroit, and Chicago during like 1967-1972, right around the days of the split with Weather Underground and all that. I'm working on gettin' his FBI record released to me so I can know more. It's sad he is gone, I think we'd be a lot closer these days. He was also a janitor, a line-cook, a fence builder, a Tai Chi instructor; he was even—by hook or by crook—the mayor of my hometown for a minute!

MRR: Your first record, Ditches, came out in 2011 and had a song called "Service," about work and being treated like shit by customers and bosses. At the time, Jeff, you were still washing dishes, right, and Camille, you were like, spinning a sign for a Thai restaurant in Lacey. Do you wanna talk about the work that you're doing these days, and how that's changed things for you?
Camille: So I started working at the New Moon Cooperative Cafe, which is a worker-owned and worker-run cafe. All decisions are consensus-based, and there is no boss. The cooperative is just over a year old. It's so fucking amazing to be in a different scenario. It was a shitty feeling to be like, "Oh, I'm like 30 and I'm working this job where I'm fucking gonna be stuck here forever." But working at the New Moon is so cool because it's also for a bigger picture thing where we're all trying to create equality in the workplace at a service job. It makes me feel like I'm not stuck anymore.
You connect with people on a very deep level and become family quickly because you have to. Not only am I appreciated for how well I cook on the line, but also for my other skills as a creative person, a visual artist. But it's also confusing, running a business where we need to make money but we're also anti-capitalist.
Jeff: I've been a street outreach worker for like six years in Olympia,

with an amazing volunteer-run anarchist collective called the Emma Goldman Youth Homeless Outreach Project (EGYHOP). We're on the streets every single night with bike carts, operating a mobile needle exchange and distributing emergency supplies, blankets, socks, gloves, etc. to street folks and people experiencing homelessness in downtown. Three of us from EGYHOP just opened a low-barrier shelter downtown, specifically for the most vulnerable and most chronically homeless, those dealing with addiction and mental illness and stuff.

Washing dishes at a restaurant, I spent a lot of time being really pissed off because of shit like customer and service worker relationships. At the shelter, it's a completely different environment—I'm still pissed at capitalism, but it's for entirely different reasons.

Starting the shelter was so fucking difficult to make happen, so many meetings, so much opposition from wealthy assholes and developers. This is the part that is so frustrating. It took two years of non-stop work and community discussions just to force the issue that safe and dignified shelter is a basic human right. I can't say I'm surprised at the bigotry, having lived in the USA for my whole life, but seriously like, what the fuck? Are you serious? It's shameful how much stigma exists against other folks 'cuz of class, poverty, drug use, mental illness, criminal history, whatever. The main cause of homelessness is the stratification of wealth and there is just no way around that.

MRR: So you're both 30 now, right?

Jeff: Well, I'm 29.

MRR: I feel like having known you for a while you're two of the only punks I know who've gotten less jaded and more stoked about shit as you've gotten older—what is up with that? How did that happen?

Camille: As the years go on, I'm like, so excited now when fall comes and there are new people coming to town. Yes! There're gonna be new bands, a new mix of people. I feel like it's really easy for people who are stuck in their thing to be like, "But what about our band?!" I think that's really funny to think about. Like, why would you be like that? It's exciting! Things are always changing and the world that we live in is evolving very fast, information-wise and music-wise. I feel like things are getting a little weirder, people are becoming more creative and there's different shit happening. It's cool! When you stay in the same small town for ten fuckin' years it's really cool for new stuff to come through.

Jeff: It's a funny problem to have, to live in such a thriving music town.

Camille: Such a problem.

Jeff: To be like, "Oh man, things were so much fucking crazier in, like, 2006." Sometimes I'm like, oh man, shit was way fuckin' badass, we had all these shows under the bridge and whatever. But then I think, I wonder what the people in Unwound or Bikini Kill say about this town. Has this town become less cool? Yes. Has it become cool in new ways? Yes. If you're expecting things to be the same and to never change, maybe being involved in punk isn't the best place for you, because the exciting thing about punk isn't what happened 20 years ago, it's what's happening now, and next year, and in five years, and ten years—or maybe we won't be in bands in ten years, and we'll be like...

Camille: Don't go too deep into that one.

MRR: So what is next for SHARKPACT?

Jeff: We just put out that record, *Run*, and are super proud of it. I think SHARKPACT is gonna put out a split tape or 7" or something with Hard Feelings from...

Camille: Duluth.

Jeff: Duluth/Superior, Minnesota. That's exciting. Gonna keep touring, playing songs, hopefully go back to Chattanooga for Do Ya Hear We every single year for eternity. We love it there. I'm also working on issue #4 of *No Biggie City*—it's gonna be good. Probably gonna do an interview with the Joester about recording bands in our attic at Punkall. He is an amazing wingnut and recording artist.

Camille: It's harder thinking about going on tour now, with our current situations, work-wise. We used to be like, "Let's go on tour!" "Okay, cool, when should we leave?" "Two weeks?" "Okay, fuck it!" and book an awesome tour and do it like four times a year—no biggie at all. Joey just told me a thing the other day, 'cuz I was like, "I don't know if we're gonna be able to go on tour!" and he was like, "Camille, you're doing a really cool thing. You're not working some shit job and stuck there, you are accomplishing big amazing things—maybe it's time to do that, and you can always go on tour."

MRR: Anything else you wanna say?

Camille: Oh god. Fuck the cops. *[Laughter]*

Jeff: Um, maybe...For every band that gets interviewed for *Maximum Rocknroll*, or *Razorcake*, or any fuckin' bigger magazine or blog, there's about a hundred other bands in Olympia that are totally fucking badass. That's the thing that sometimes happens with the world of punk archiving, so many bands that get forgotten about all the time. Any band that is deemed "the sound of Olympia," or "Olympia's biggest band" or whatever, it's a fucking lie. The tightest thing about Olympia is that we're drenched with so many different kinds of bands, so many different kinds of music and artistic projects that never get recognized outside of our small town. I think that's a bummer sometimes, but at the end of the day I'm like, fuck, that's awesome, I hope that it kinda stays like that.

Camille: I am also constantly reminded how lucky we are to be able to do what we do. This is fucking cool! When I hear people bitching and moaning like, "Oh man, I have to go on tour again! Tour is so hard!" Whining about—

Jeff: Money!

Camille: Whining about being on tour!

Jeff: Whining about the shows, whining about venues!

Camille: Being like, "We only got like $30, that's fucked up!" It's like mmmhmm...

Jeff: You're fuckin' lucky.

Camille: You're lucky you got to leave your town and go on tour, you whiny baby. Be grateful for your fuckin' situation. I think it's really easy, if you're doing it long enough, to be like, "No one knows who we are by now! This sucks!" But it's like, shut up.

Jeff: It's hardly the point.

Camille: It's not the point! I think a lot of people lose the point of why they started playing music. I think that's a very common thing. I'm always like, "Man this sucks, I have to go to work, then I have to go to band practice, then I have another band practice, then I have to like, draw a tattoo to give someone." Then I'm like, "Oh, yeah, wait, all very fun things, this is great, my life rules, actually."

Jeff: What's the point of punk? I guess the point of punk is to keep making punk something that makes us feel alive. To not forget the point.

Camille: Definitely.

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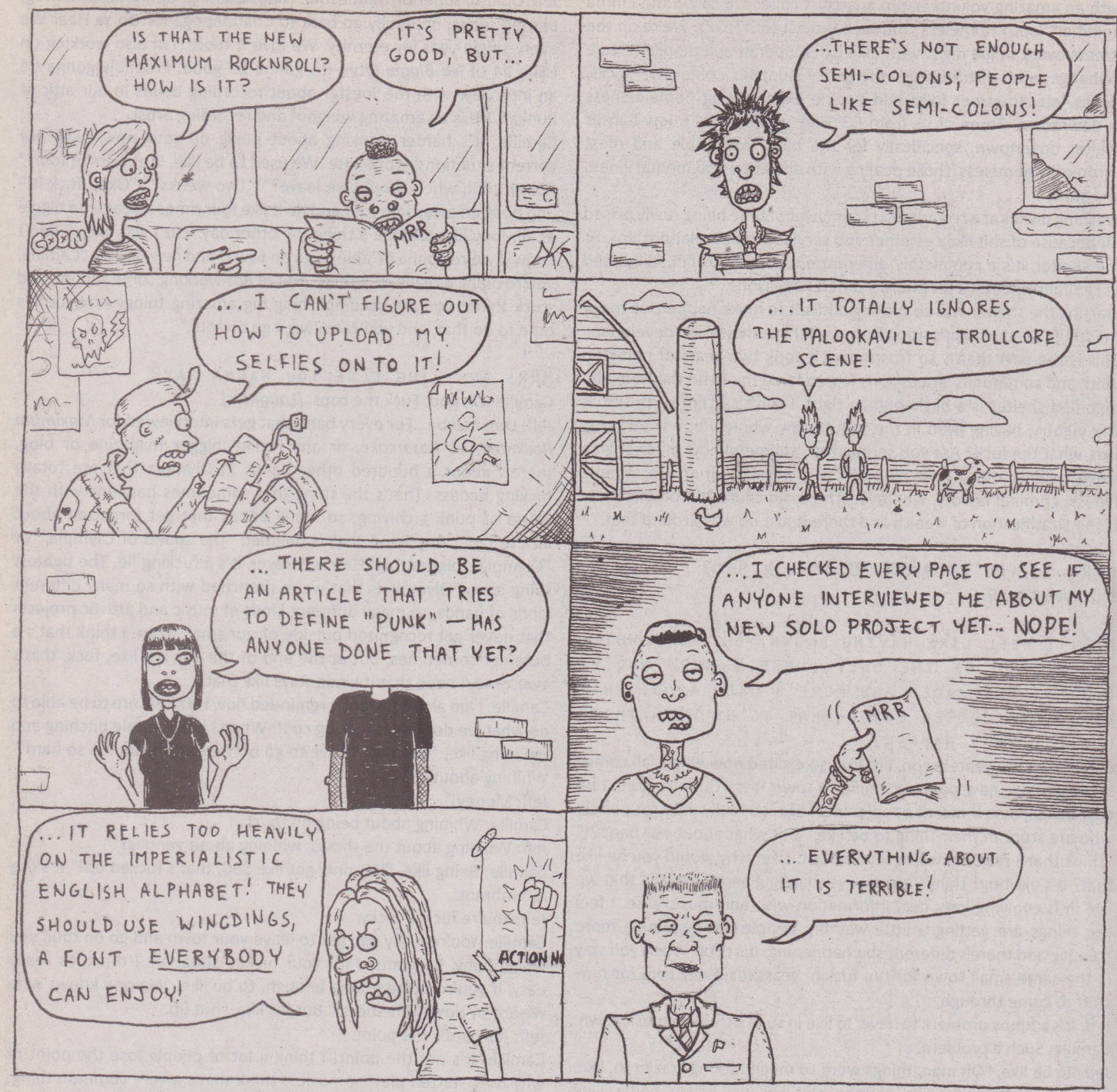

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HYSTERESE

When I got the first Hysterese record in 2011 it was like a light in the darkness, because it sounded so much cooler than the standard stuff coming from Germany for many years, the lame powerviolence, third class '80s hardcore, badly played sludge or by now, as fashion goes and not too far from comedy, Deutschpunk. It seemed time to ask them some questions—they just released an all-killer-no-filler new LP on Sabotage and Dirtcult and are about to invade North American basements from June 5th to 20th. Keep an eye out for them—you won't regret it! Interview and introduction by Tino "Die Katze" Dittus. Translation and photos by Sabine "Beenie: Haydl.

MRR: Ever since I can remember your band Hysterese has been all over, releasing little but playing your asses off. Tours for sure, but sometimes playing long distance shows every weekend as well. How important is that whole band thing, how important is punk to you? Was it like "we have to play this and that"? Would you quit your jobs to actually be able to go on tour?

Moritz: I don't have a job at the moment. What Hysterese means to me: We're going so many places and meeting people all over the continent (world, universe…)—I would have never dreamed that would happen someday. I can play rock music how I love it and express myself with it, which is a huge privilege. And I'm able to do all that with Helen, the most important person in my life, so the band is pretty crucial to me. I don't know what to say about punk in general – punk is shit? Punk is rad? Fuck yourself? I don't know.

Haug: The many shows we play are a good opportunity to sometimes escape our shitty small town Tübingen. I don't wanna hang out at the same place all the time and see all the same faces every day, I wanna have new input and I don't even have to spend money for that. No, I'm rewarded with a great show—that's fantastic! Of course you sometimes get fed up with driving around and you just want to get out of the tour van, but you tend to miss that really soon after getting home again. Speaking of "punk": I don't know what people understand by that, at least I don't give a fuck.

MRR: The internet says you will be touring the states in June 2015. Do you have any high hopes for that? And how did that tour happen?

Haug: Of course we want to be world famous! [*laughs*] I think most of the bands in Europe wanna tour the states nowadays. If it's really going to happen in June, that's enough of a "success" for me.

MRR: Your hometown Tübingen seems to have a big, friendly and—most of all—active punk scene. There're a lot of dorks in front of the Epplehaus doors, drunk young crusties, hippies, and other scumbags (and when I say scumbags, I mean scumbags). What's this venue? How is it connected to the New Direction Festival, which you are involved in? Where are you in 15 years? What's your impetus?

Moritz: It's pretty hard to describe the Epplehaus—it's kind of a mix between a squatted house and an institution financed by the city. Some decades ago a drug problem had to be solved there and after that a small independent house-association took care of everything (besides some supervisory authorities of the city). In the last few years there are mostly young students hanging out at the Epplehaus—skipping school, listening to techno music, watching TV together.

When I started as a sound engineer, the main interest of the people there was definitely punk rock! There still weren't too many folks coming to the shows, but at least they knew a lot about underground rock music. Your personal view of this place may be kind of distorted because you only know it from festivals (which go really wild all the time), while shows on normal weekdays only attract about twenty nerds who rub their beer bellies. There aren't enough cool people here in Tübingen to start something spectacular, but it's worth the fun we have at the few festivals here in our small district.

Speaking of cool festivals: The New Direction Festival in Herrenberg (a town nearby) emerged from the Crust-Fest "Be Part Of The Scene." The organizer of this festival misappropriated a lot of money and some cool people from the South, who are all connected by politics / hardcore / music / DIY, started something new and awesome.

In fifteen years we'll live with you and a dozen of other punk professors in an old farmer's building in the countryside, that's my plan. I don't know what you mean by "impetus"—I do my stuff the way I want to. There's no big plan behind it.

MRR: So, what did you get into this punk rock thing?

Moritz: I wasn't actually "brought" to punk…Well, maybe there was a formative experience. One day my friends Sven and Stefan showed me a Hellacopters CD they found at the local convenience store and I totally fell in love with the music. After that I transformed into a rowdy "Schweinerock" fanboy with ornamented cowboy boots and I drenched myself in beer—but I don't think that had anything to do with punk. I didn't like the few "real punks" that I knew and as a teenager I thought it would be silly, shiftless, and pretentious to be seen as one. I preferred to be a mean plebe! Maybe because it bothered my mother more.

Helen: Moritz and a couple of friends had a school band and the singer was dismissed, because he stole the bassist's girlfriend—then they asked me, knowing I was the jazz singer of the school's big band. That's when it all started…

MRR: The band seems to be pretty "successful." How far would you go to improve that even more? I hint at lousy stuff like "*OX-Fanzine* and *MAD* present..." and so on, thinking of the whole German high gloss fanzine thing (except for Plastic Bomb and Trust).

Moritz: Ha! We're on the cover of the Punk-rock Fanzine, you can buy that at the station kiosk. A lot of jerks work for zines like *OX* or *MAD*, that's why I don't want anything to do with that. What's up with that anyway: Do more people go to shows or prettier or richer people when the band was advertised on posters like that beforehand? What's the appeal of this whole "presented by…" thing? Do they give the bands money or call all of their friends or coax you before the show?

MRR: What do you, seriously, hate the most about punk?

Moritz: There's never a mirror in the bathroom in punk venues! Fuck, I want to look at myself after washing my hands! Except for that, someone always forgets to cool the beer. There's piss everywhere…And shitty sound! Why doesn't anyone take care of a proper PA? That's actually really fun!

Helen: Sleeping, show, and rehearsal rooms are always cold as fuck! Self-built ovens that are broken and you rather have to fear a carbon monoxide poisoning—that's why the reason above becomes valid again. Showers that let you fear either incineration or frostbite and most of all: narcissistic scene talk.

MRR: You don't do much talking on stage, plus Haug completely ignores the crowd by showing off his back—which I like by the way. Why is that?

Haug: It's a secret, which means something that is kept out of the knowledge or sight of others or is known only to oneself or a few... It's an interesting thing!

Helen: I never felt like saying something on stage. So why should I? Makes no sense!

Moritz: I have a short attention span. When I watch bands I like to see them power through their set—that's why I do it the same way. I couldn't say something "rock show"-appropriate anyway.

MRR: Any current German bands you'd like to tell everyone about?

Helen: I liked the Minus Apes, Out On A Limb and Patsy O'Hara, but they all split up.

Moritz: Our buddies in Nakam are just finishing their LP and that's gonna be fucking great!

MRR: Anything you like to do besides all that band etc. shit?

Haug: Whisky, I have a new addiction... Scotch whisky.

Helen: Retiree stuff with Moritz!

MRR: What would you like to have on your tombstone?

Haug: Everything may be different the next morning as it was the night before!

Moritz: Safety first!

Hysterese is touring North America this summer. Check hysterese.bandcamp.com for updates.

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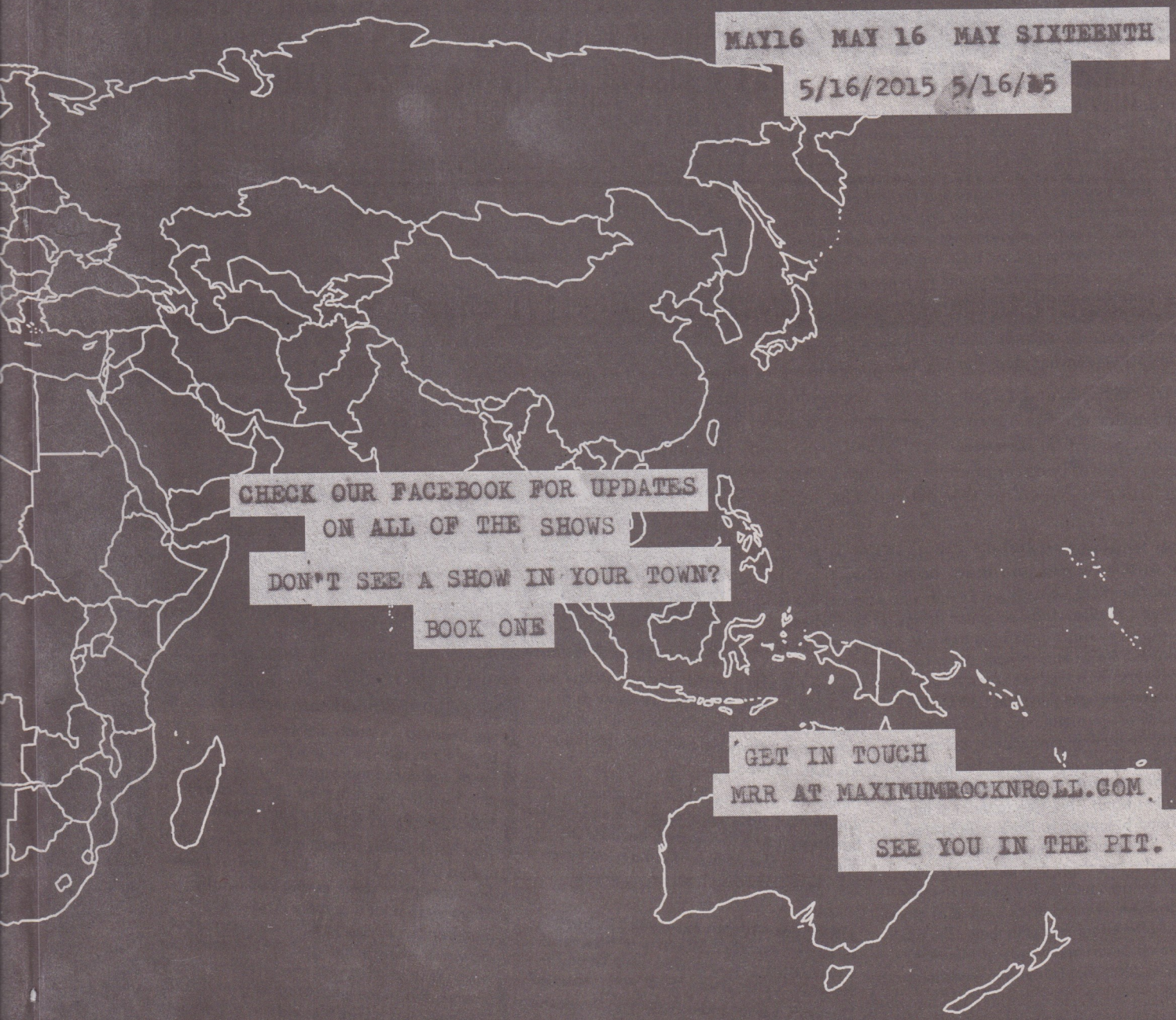

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MINEFIELD

Russian punk band Minefield grew up in the industrial city of Izhevsk. Built around a famous arms factory and located about 1,200 kilometers east of Moscow, the city is home to a little over 600,000 people. The band has produced two demo tapes, the second of which was released as a 7" record by Bad Hair Life Records in Finland. Here the guys answer questions and offer some young wisdom about their origins and inspirations, punk life in Izhevsk, Russian punk in general and the changing state of affairs in their home country. Interview and introduction by Vilja Joensuu (Osuuskunta 82, Bad Hair Life Records, Finland) and Larry Nance (2nd grade public school teacher, Bad Hair Life Records, USA).

Damir: vocals

Sasha: guitar

Misha: bass

Sereja: drums

MRR: How did Minefield get started? Who are you and how did you meet each other?

Sereja: Minefield is four guys: Damir, who screams like a wild beast, Sasha, who rips guitar strings, Misha, whose bass shows you who's the boss and me, Sergey who beats the drums. We've known each other for many years, from the time when Misha was a fourteen-year-old skinhead and Damir looked like a nu-metal boy. We all met at a hardcore punk gig in Izhevsk. Before that, Sasha and I had already known each other for few years and played together in another band. This idea to make a hardcore band belonged to Damir. He invited Misha, Sasha and another drummer. They practiced a few times and planned to play their first show, but the day before the gig their drummer went to drink instead of practice so I offered to play with them. The next day, Damir asked me to play at Minefield's first show. After that I stayed in Minefield forever.

Sasha: I had already played in another band, but I wanted to make something that was rawer, faster and wilder. We were familiar with the other guys, because we were all involved in the local punk scene, and they had the same idea too, so we started to practice very quickly.

Damir: Passion to make independent art united us. The first brick was put in the Minefield foundation around the end of 2010.

Sereja: *Piss Off* is the second Minefield recording. For the whole record we paid 1500 rubles which is approximately $30. Nikita from Drunk With Power released it on tape. The first recording was a demo tape that we recorded a week after the first show and after only three or four rehearsals with me, so it sounds very slow and pretty bad. It was released on tape.

Damir: The *Отъебись*! EP, in my opinion, is one of the fundamental recordings of Russian hardcore. I love this record, because it's filled with rebellious spirit. I have enjoyed the demo recording much more lately.

MRR: You live in Izhevsk. Where is that exactly? What's it like and does living in a place like that influence your lives and your music?

Damir: It is small industrial city in the eastern part of Russia, situated 1200 km away from Moscow. The city grew around an arms factory, which was founded in the second half of the 18th century. Do you know the Kalashnikov rifle?

Sereja: You can know nothing about Izhevsk, but you can't know nothing about the AK-47. Izhevsk is a city where it was assembled and where it was designed. Actually Izhevsk is a mid-sized city with a population of 630,000 people, built around factories. Now most of the factories are closed, and there are too many shopping malls. I like to live in this city because it's pretty calm and it gives me capabilities to indulge in my favorite things. There are not so many good bands in our city, but I'm glad that most of them are not trying to play what is now fashionable.

Sasha: Izhevsk is a small town in a region called Udmurt Republic, but it had a strong hardcore punk scene during 2007-2012. There were a lot of people involved in shows and bands, playing in different genres, but now everything's changed. It seems that our scene is stagnating and needs new blood. Of course, this place influenced us a lot, I think. We were just a bunch of kids, who had nothing to do, angry about life in this boring, gloomy and grey town. We expressed it all in our songs.

MRR: I suppose some of you have moved to bigger cities recently. How has it changed Minefield?

Sasha: Now Misha and Damir live in St. Petersburg. I think now they have more things to do and life in St. Petersburg is more funny and interesting. This is one of the reasons, I think, that Minefield hasn't written anything new since the EP came out. They just don't feel the same as they felt in Izhevsk. They

don't have enough anger to write new songs. Two months ago they came to Izhevsk and we had a rehearsal. We also wanted to write and record some new stuff, but we just couldn't. There are some people who wanted to release our future records, but we decided that it would be more honest to not try to compose anything. If you don't have fun why do it at all? So we decided to take a break with Minefield. When the time comes, we'll come together again.

Sereja: Minefield experienced a musical recession after our big tour in 2012 and the moving of Misha and Damir aggravated the situation more. We play sometimes, but we can't move forward as a band.

Damir: My life is associated with St. Petersburg at the moment. Minefield is an Izhevsk band and forever will be an Izhevsk band in my memory. We shouldn't cling to the band like grim death, but try to create something new and really interesting. The peak of the band's popularity was in 2012. I think that we succeed in expanding the views on hardcore in Russia. Minefield had a goal: to infect as many people as we could with hardcore. And because of that, we had a slogan, "Hardcore as Heroin." Is it clear for all? No? It means that we're obsessed with punk! We haven't said everything we have to say yet. The band is not active at the moment, but probably we'll record something else someday.

MRR: How did you come across punk music in the first place? What was it like for you to grow up punk in a place like Izhevsk?

Sereja: I came into punk seven or eight years ago. I was listening to alternative rock, pop punk and one of the most famous commercial Russian punk bands, Tarakany. Later, I met Sasha and then one day he invited me to a gig in a nearby city. We went there by train for six hours. It was my first trip to a punk show and six hours seemed to me like an eternity. On that trip I met a lot of people who gave me much good punk music to listen to. Unfortunately, not so many people are passionate about punk in Izhevsk right now and their number decreases every year.

Damir: I saw a music video of Agnostic Front on TV. It's hard to make something interesting and get good a response among the public in Izhevsk. All of the independent community is carried out by a bunch of enthusiasts (booking/bands/labels) like in many other cities, but not so massively.

Sasha: When I was a fourteen-year-old kid, I used to visit local rock shows. However, they were only called "rock." I think they had nothing in common with real rock, except guitars and drums. It was a genre called "Russian rock"—an indescribable mix of lame-ass music with pseudo-intellectual lyrics. Despite the fact that all those bands were boring, they had enough young fans to feed their egos and act like stars. After this, I gradually started to understand that all of these "fans/stars" relationships were absolute bullshit and that scene was shit. I had been into some punk rock for that time already. I listened to Korol I Shut, Naïve, Tarakany! and other "big" bands. In 2006 I went to my first hardcore punk gig and realized then where true music is living. That's a shortened story of how I got into punk. There were a lot of punks in Izhevsk during those years, so usually people didn't give a fuck about your appearance. But you always could easily get into fight with Gopniks or Nazis, especially when you went home from a concert alone in the night.

MRR: Live videos of your shows seem wild. Are there many opportunities for holding shows around where you live? What kind of problems do you encounter in booking shows? Are there a lot of people going to shows?

Damir: Yes, many punks are stoked on our "crazy" shows. I like that it excites people, but our best shows haven't been filmed, unfortunately. There are serious problems with booking shows in Izhevsk, because there are no places for such events. Mostly shows were done in cheap cafes/restaurants and rehearsal rooms. As lame as it sounds, it's all about money. Probably because of them there is stagnation in Izhevsk. Most promoters don't want to book shows, because they know they will lose a lot of money. Low attendance, big distances between cities and inadequate prices for trains/planes blunt altruistic ideas. It's much easier in St. Petersburg. There are venues organized by punks, where you can perform, practice and record.

Sereja: A few years ago, we had a friendly club where there were many punk shows. Unfortunately, now its administration has changed and punk and rock music are not allowed. We do not have enough places where we can play, and most of our shows are in other cities. Most of the problems with clubs were started when cops began to close punk gigs in Izhevsk. Another problem is that too few people are going to shows and the money that is spent usually does not return to promoters.

Sasha: It's pretty expensive to organize a show and it's about 90% certain that your won't get your money back. Venues don't like punk music because of its wildness. They prefer soft rock and in Izhevsk there are no small underground venues, only big clubs. We have to make shows in cafes or pubs. Maybe it's not so awful, but really they are far from perfect places for hardcore shows.

MRR: How is record distribution where you live, or in Russia in general? Are there good record stores or do people rely on small distros and mailorder to buy records? I know that mailing can be expensive and problematic.

Sereja: Generally, it's small distros at shows.

Only a small number of Russian punk bands can be found in record stores and most of them are famous commercial punk bands.

Damir: There are distros in almost every small town. Russian Post is a big dump! Punks should avoid working with this company. If there is a possibility, we send packages with someone traveling by train or car. It's much more reliable and faster. There are a lot of commercial "rock shops" in Russia, which distribute bootlegs of famous bands and recordings of shitty groups. In big cities there are vinyl stores, but prices are absolutely inappropriate. There is something similar in Moscow, but it's not very popular. Usually punks order records from foreign stores.

Sasha: Everything's in the hands of small distros. There are three labels in Izhevsk, releasing and distributing underground punk music: Drunk With Power (which released our tape), Chunga-Changa, and mine, Teenage Waste. Russian Post is very expensive and slow with mailing over Russia, let alone mailing to other parts of the world. So if you're waiting for your package from Russia for over two months, stay calm, it's normal.

MRR: With the current political situation inside Russia, how restricted do you feel your lives are? Is getting threatened by homophobes or fascists a real problem for you? What do you think the future holds?

Damir: We are punks. There are no restrictions for people like us. We have an open mind! But, for most of the population of Russia, life is limited like the choice of goods in a supermarket. Every dissonance is punished by society. Unfortunately, people haven't learned yet to respect other opinions and interests.

Sasha: I feel more threatened by the huge amount of cops, who want to control every part of your life. Russia's a fucking police state and the number of cops is increasing every year.

They are everywhere. They try to decide where you can walk, where and when you can drink, and they always ask stupid questions like, "What are you doing in a district where you don't live?" There is also a special police department called the "Department of Fighting Extremism," which tries to control all social activities, both negative and positive, from usual punk gigs to massive protest meetings. In fact, they've become a poljtical police in Russia, who try to prevent all actions confrontational to the ruling party's way. They are very annoying.

MRR: Besides some obvious favorites seen on the cover of your EP, what are your favorite bands and biggest influences?

Damir: Heresy, Raw Power, Septic Death, Poison Idea, Big Boys—this is a small part of my favorite bands. They helped me to enlarge my musical scope. Unique bands!

Sereja: I listen to different kinds of punk and hardcore. Five or six years ago, it was mostly aggressive music that I listened to, but now I like to listen to more melodic punk like Rise Against, Strike Anywhere, Nothington or Krum Bums. Sometimes I can listen to bands like Common Enemy, Bones Brigade, Set It Straight, or Comeback Kid.

Sasha: I like old American hardcore punk stuff like Agression, Battalion of Saints, Germs, MDC and Reagan Youth, but I really listen to a lot of different music of all genres. Only when you listen to different bands and different styles do you realize how cool punk is with its simplicity and outspoken attitude.

MRR: Most bands from Russia, at least the ones who travel, play a completely different style of music from you. How have you been received in your own country? How did you end up playing the style you do?

Sasha: We were sick of the fact that most of the people around us listened to only popular bands like Rancid or the Casualties. We wanted to show that punk can be different. We wanted to create something faster and dirtier sounding, like the old bands we all liked. I didn't think that we would have a good feedback but we had. As a result we went on tour over Russia and Ukraine.

Sereja: Most Russian bands are very similar and we were so tired of that. Unfortunately, different bands like Minefield are not so popular, but at each of our shows some of the people support us. Some people would travel from different cities and sing with us. Our shows always bring some destruction and I'm glad that some people have fun with us. We have some directionality, but we play as we can and the result is a Minefield.

Damir: Punks from different parts of Russia are interested in our band. Thanks to them a lot! Most bands during the time of Minefield's creation were totally shit. All those bands could be anything but hardcore. We decided to show society what real hardcore is.

Catch up with Minefield at minefield.bandcamp.com or minefield3412@gmail.com.

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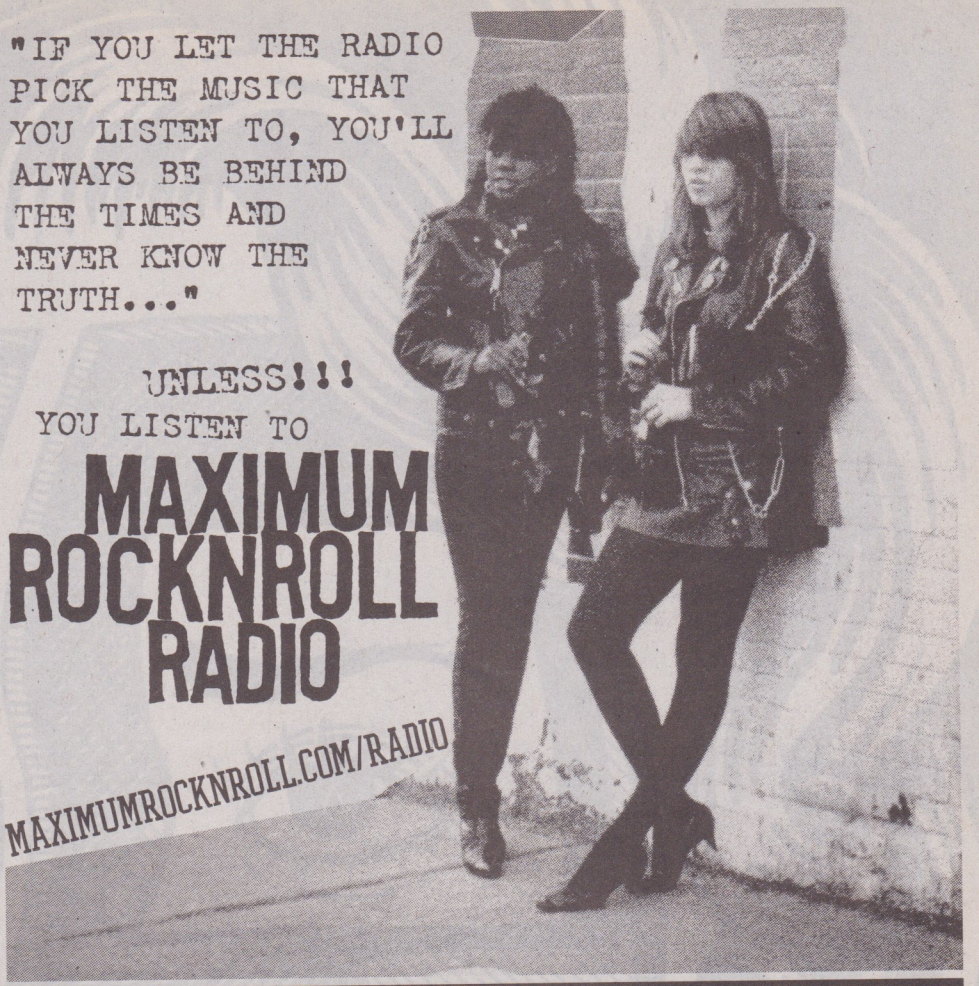


EDM

LOUD! FAST! PHILLY!

Philly punk has always gotten the short end of the stick. We're not NYC, we're not DC, and we're certainly not Boston. Until recently, Philly has been both ignored and maligned. While there have always been bands that made it out of the city and gained a following (Flag of Democracy and The Dead Milkmen in the '80s, Violent Society and Ink & Dagger in the '90s, Kid Dynamite and RAMBO in the oughts, and a whole slew of new and interesting bands in the last few years) more often than not the scene has existed in a bit of a vacuum, for better or for worse.

Joseph Gervasi and his Loud! Fast! Philly! oral history project shine a bright spotlight on Philadelphia subculture and all the bands and people who have kept it alive for the past thirty years. These are not just interviews with a bunch of punk dudes talking about the good old. Rather, Gervasi has chosen to talk to the individuals, past and present, who make a difference not just because they play in bands but because they book shows, run community spaces, engage in political activism, and do so much more than just pick up a guitar.

These interviews are both interesting and important because they show the positive impact that punk and hardcore can have. Punk is a steppingstone and the subjects of Gervasi's interviews show just where it can lead. This article was done in conjunction with a writeup on the MRR website by Gervasi and interviewee-turned-interviewer Stacey Finney about the project and some of their favorite moments from it so far. Check that out at maximumrocknroll.com.

Interview and introduction by Yoni Kroll.
Photos courtesy of Karen Kirchhoff.

MRR: What was the impetus for this project? How did this all start?

The idea came about at the very end of 2012 while talking to Eric Bresler at PhilaMoCA. He was starting the Cinedelphia Film Festival and he approached me as a film programmer to do something Philly-related. I always do cult films with Exhumed, so I wanted to do something completely different. I thought I'd do something with punk, cause that's always been a part of my life but it's not something I've done anything with [professionally], and I wanted to incorporate some kind of a live element to it as well, have some kind of performance so it would be really different than a screening.

The idea became to have a series of clips of Philly bands and maybe have some people there to talk. In compiling this and having people start to submit stuff I wanted something that would last. People could come out to this event and it would be fun but there's a finite number of people who could attend, many people wouldn't even know that it had ever happened, and after it was over it was just disappear into the ether. And that's where the idea came to [conduct interviews with] people that would be put up on the Cinedelphia Website and would stand forever. So there would be a permanent document that would come out of this and a lot of different people would be able to see it.

MRR: What are the positives and negatives of audio?

I like the intimacy of it. I like the idea that people are going to listen to this, many people with an iPod, and the person [speaking] will be in your head. Philly is a city of many accents. I like the idea of hearing what people really sound like from this and doing it in a way that's unedited so it's their version of themselves. They would be telling their story and I wouldn't condense or alter the story to suit my thesis or what I was trying to put across. So really it was this person, they're intimately in your ear, they're telling you a story, and everybody loves having a story told to them.

MRR: Do you have a thesis or some kind of end goal?

No. Well, only in so much that I like the idea that it's something that continues to thrive and continues to, I hope, move forward and energize people. I didn't want it to be a museum piece: everybody talking about the good old days and then the individual would determine what the point was where punk stopped. Because it didn't. It does move along. And too many other projects that I had been witness to not only negated the experiences of certain types of people but also negated the experiences of people of a certain age when it all ends in 1980 or 1982 or 1979.

MRR: I think that's one of the problems with a lot of the punk books, the oral histories and the like. It's really, really static and it is being very purposely assembled. The writers and editors decide who and what is important and only talk to those people. I feel like that leaves a lot out.

That's absolutely true. It also draws this demarcation in the sand where this thing ends. It's usually when people have fallen into a state of addiction, their hair is falling out of their head, they've grown fat, they have kids, they made a bad metal album, whatever, and that's the end of it. But there are other people who pick up this thing and take it in different directions.

MRR: It's also really interesting how a lot of these books are basically saying, "We haven't forgotten women. Here's a section on them! They might not have played in bands but they were great fans and they wrote cool zines and stuff."

"... and they made good cupcakes." Yeah, that was never my experience in going through hardcore punk as a young person and on. I was always in a scene that had a lot of different types of people and there were lots of very active women. So there was never even a thought that it was something special or something that needed cuddly attention or something. It was a simple fact that women were as involved as men.

MRR: How many have you done so far? Is this going to continue?

Fifty-seven have been published so far. I would be happy to continue to talk to people. Most of the people I've interviewed I don't know personally. Or maybe I know about a third. A lot of them are blind calls or referrals [from other interviewees]. As an individual with an active mind who wants to draw in lots of information, I want to hear these stories. I see no reason to stop.

MRR: If you tune into a random interview, what would you be getting out of it? Point to a random interview and let's talk about that.

[Joseph closes his eyes and points to an interview with Adam Goren a.k.a. Atom and His Package]

One of the things I like to stress to people who haven't listened to all the interviews—and I would assume that most people have not listened to all that many—is that they should listen to the people they don't know because they're going to tell you the stories you don't already know.

Adam is a really interesting character because he played in Fracture, a pop punk band, but he also did something with a sequencer and managed to travel all over the world performing these really weird songs in punk venues. Here is someone who did something unique within the umbrella of punk but was not punk in sound.

The stories of people growing up are always really fascinating to me: what their neighborhood was like, how it changed over the years, what they were like in school, how they found punk, what kind of people they were before they were introduced to the germ of punk and then what it ultimately grew into in their person.

MRR: When I've explained this project to people, one of my favorite examples is Stacey Finney, who became a social worker after playing in bands and living in punk houses. I like that interview because it's not, "Oh, you played in Kremlin Korps"—because 999 out of a thousand Philly punks unfortunately haven't heard of the band—but it's much more about what she took out of her experiences in punk.

I agree. Otherwise it's just loud thrashy music. And, you know, going forward as an adult, if you're not going to be having a charged mohawk and be bumming change off the street or all this silly bullshit, these accoutrements that are attached unfortunately to punk, how do you take this energy, these progressive ideas, forward into the real world and do something?

Stacey is a great example of that as far as what she's done in her professional life. As a result we've become friends and she's gone and done interviews for the project. She brings a great warmth and empathy to the interviews which is clearly something she's learned from her real job so when she talks to people she can get them to talk about things they might not be comfortable with and they feel comfortable around her because she's an empathetic person.

MRR: I definitely feel that a lot of what you're getting with these interviews is looking at how Philadelphia changed, how music changed, how culture changed—all big important issues—by looking at the micro of someone living at a squat at 43rd and whatever and the crazy party they had one night and how everything changed after that.

Yeah, and it also intersects with a lot of other aspects of history: the history of the city, of different social movements that were moving through the city, people had problems with police corruption that was endemic in the city for many years. It moves in different directions because although I have an interest in punk it's by far not my only interest. So the idea is having this greater focus, presenting an oral history of the city periphery or its more artistic endeavors.

CABBAGE COLLECTIVE MEMBERS

L. F. P. organizer, Joseph Gervasi, far right

Do you find like there's a certain thread that runs through things or that going into an interview you have an idea of what you're going to talk about?
I never have any prepared questions but I have some basic idea as who this person is and what their core contribution was. But oftentimes it really depends on the oratory skills of the individual and how comfortable they are and how well we jell, because we only really have a very slight pre-interview to introduce one another and then I'm hitting record and the entirety of this interview is posted unedited. So sometimes there are rocky patches and I always wish I could go back when I mispronounce a word or say the wrong band name or something like that but really it just kind of flows with the person and what they want.

MRR: The great thing about this project is that it's not a who's who. There're a lot of names in here that people might not know but I'm sure their stories are really awesome. What's the range of ages of the people you're talking to?
Bobby Startup is 71. Will McAndrew was the youngest person I spoke to.

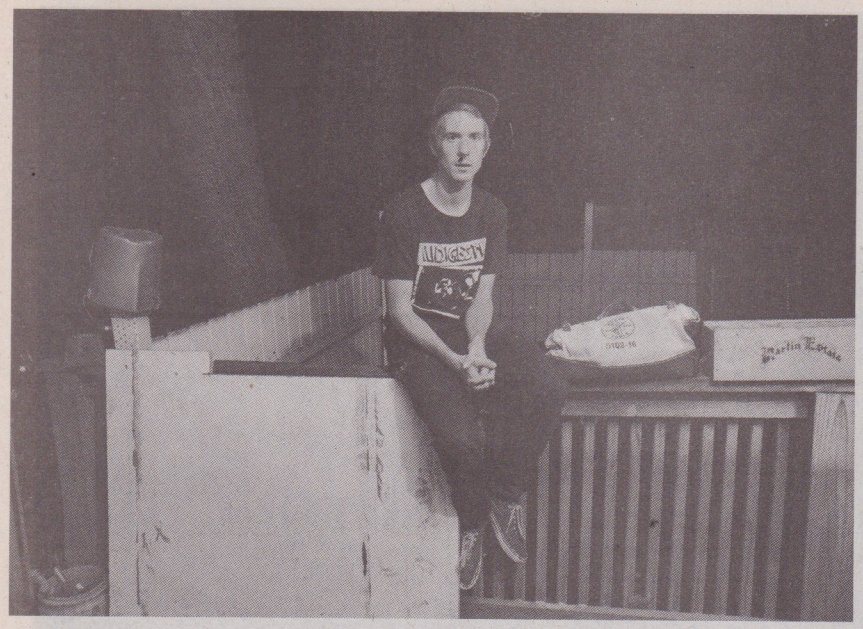
MRR: Did you find that they had anything in common?
You'd probably find it in their enthusiasm. Almost everyone I spoke to was enthusiastic, regardless of their age. From the youngest person to the oldest person, people have carried some enthusiasm for the music, for their scene, these ideas.

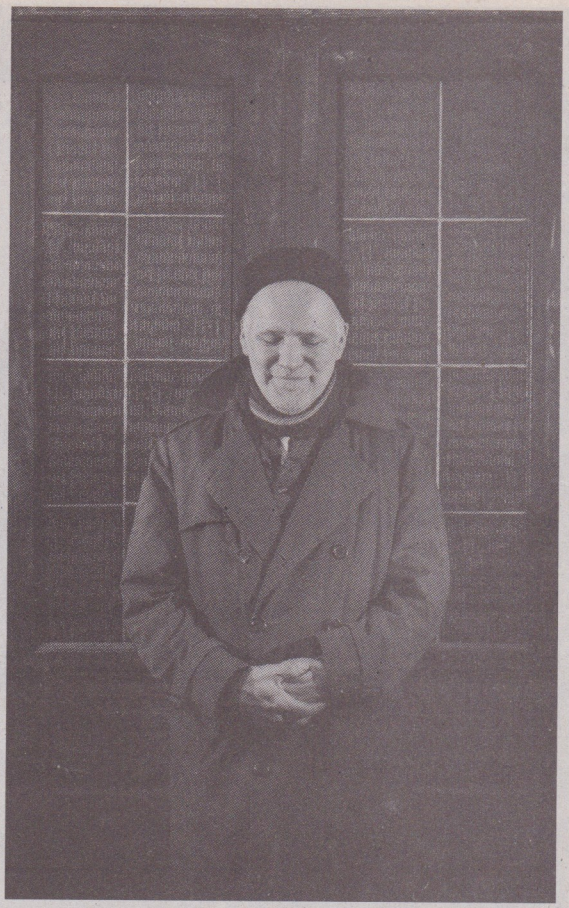
MRR: I haven't listened to the interview with Petri Dish from Prometheus Radio Project but I'm sure that's a lot of fun. It's interesting to me because I've known him in passing for more than a decade but he's not someone I'd associate with punk. I don't know his history but running a non-profit that focuses on low-power radio barnstorming is a very, very DIY thing. That's definitely something that is at the heart of the punk ethos.
Sometimes with some of the people the connections to hardcore punk as a form of music are very thin or delicate. I might even be stretching it a little bit because I think that they embody the ethos very well. Like Elizabeth Arnold, who does a lot of anti-fracking and other activism. There is a connection to punk but primarily I wanted her to be able to express her ideas and also speak to young women who were interested in being involved in activism and wanted to know how did she go about doing this and what impediments she ran into.

MRR: Is there anybody you would have liked to have interviewed before they moved away or more importantly before they died?
There are people who are on the list. I need to speak to Jim from Flag of Democracy because FOD was and is an absolutely essential Philly hardcore band, most crucially because they've always been a band and have always embodied the ethos. They never went and made the bad metal record and they never really disappeared. They've always been here. I did shows with them in the '90s and saw shows with them in the '80s and they're still playing today.

I wanted to talk to Ralph from Franklin. He lived here for some years and whenever he's in town we never managed to connect. There's a list in my head of people I want to talk to.

MRR: And when you get your Ouija Board working? Any dead people you want to interview?
I don't think there's really anybody. I could have talked to Howard [Saunders], the Cosmic Commander. But there are other people who could probably tell those stories. With so many interviews I don't really beat myself over the head.





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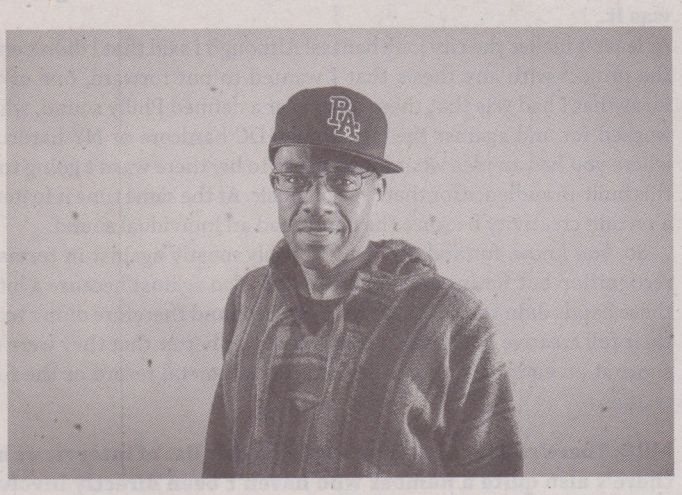

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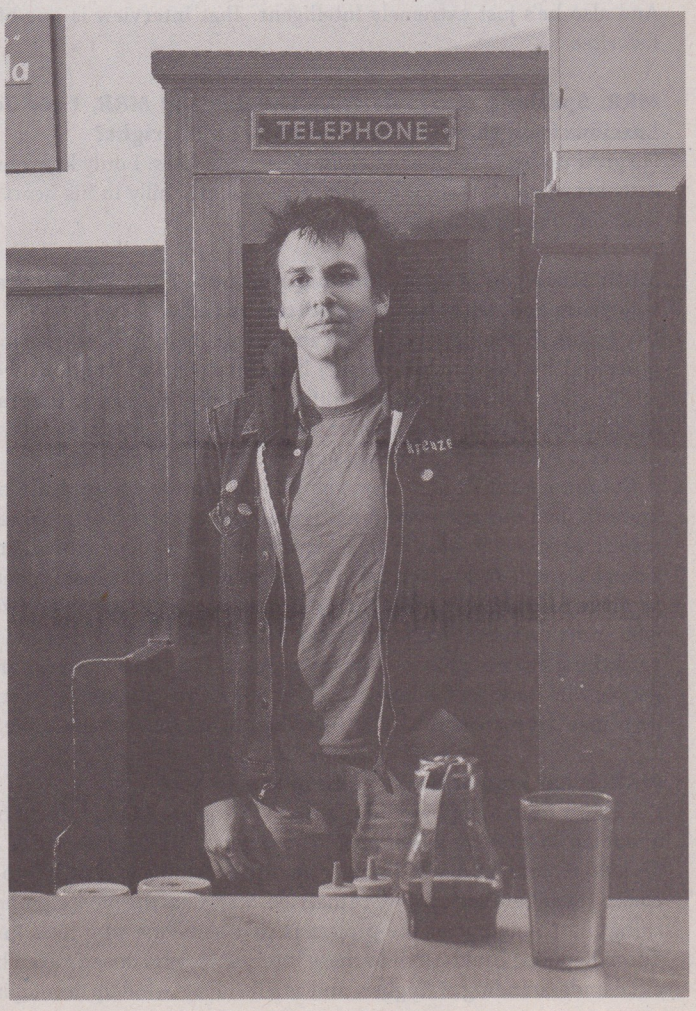
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MRR: How has the process of doing the interviews changed for you from your first one to the most recent? I guess that's Cordy Swope from Ruin to Vincent Feldman. Who's that?
Vincent Feldman wrote a book called *City Abandoned*. He was in some Philly hardcore bands in the early '80s and then he was involved in the DC scene for a while. His book is really beautiful and fascinating. He knows a lot about the history of Philadelphia. He was there when the MOVE compound was burned down. And if you see the *Let the Fire Burn* documentary [about the bombing] you can see him there shooting pictures. This was a crucial event in Philly history. While it has nothing to do with punk, it does have something to do with the darker history of Philadelphia.

MRR: It's all pretty dark, really. Speaking of the city, can you expand a bit on how the theme of Philadelphia runs through this project? Not everyone you're talking to lives in the city anymore or is originally from here. Do the interviews always come back to discussing some aspect of Philadelphia?
Some of the people are not from the city and some of the people I spoke to are not from the city but certainly did things in the city. Philadelphia usually is discussed at some point. And usually it threads throughout the interviews, because I think that the city itself does play a role in these things. But I don't think that it would only appeal to people from Philadelphia because some of the experiences can be extrapolated to other major cities.

One of the interviews has nothing to do with Philadelphia. I interviewed Martin Sprouse in Oakland last year when I did the Loud! Fast! Philly! screening out there. Sprouse has nothing to do with Philadelphia other than the fact that for a young me, he wrote two books that came out of punk. He was with *Maximum Rocknroll* and just had a tremendous impact on me and all my projects going forward. And also he's just extremely intelligent. That interview is one of my favorites.

MRR: Speaking of people from the Bay and *MRR*, I see Jesse Luscious is on that list. He grew up in Philly, right?
He grew up here. He started *Philly Zine* in the '80s. I only knew him a little bit when he was here but he always kept Philly in his heart and went on to really prominent bands.

MRR: Since you started working on Loud! Fast! Philly! almost two years ago, what have you gotten out of it?
I've gotten to meet a lot of really amazing people. Their stories might otherwise be left out [of history] because their contributions would just be edited as being not as significant as other things. So there's the satisfaction of just having a variety of voices and there's the satisfaction of having voices that truly represent the city of Philadelphia.

Going forward I'd like to be able to add more voices to this so it's more fleshed out and even more representative and that it serves to inspire people. The idea is that I don't want it to be a static history, I don't want it to just tell tales of the past. It should inspire people to move forward, especially young people and especially even people who aren't even from this country who can listen to this thing and find something that is universal in the stories. The [interviewees] aren't people who have been bestowed with a golden wreath and set forth to do things but instead set about with their own drive and initiative.

MRR: What kind of feedback have you gotten?
I've heard from a pretty good number of people. In fact, I heard from a woman in the Czech Republic who listened to the interviews and decided to contact me. We struck up a friendship and that led to her coming over here and now we're married. So I guess the most significant thing that came out of the project is that someone who lives in the Czech Republic could listen to these interviews, who doesn't even have a full understanding of English, and as a result we wind up developing a relationship that leads to marriage, which I wasn't expecting when I sat down with Cordy Swope of Ruin for interview number one in February 2013.

MRR: Philly punk and hardcore has always had this underdog nature to it and I think that's because a lot of bands just never get very popular anywhere else. That's definitely both a good thing and a bad one. On the one hand, a lot of bands might fade into obscurity but on the other, it does give bands the chance to do whatever they like. We're not NY and we're not DC.

In the *American Hardcore* book Philly is barely mentioned. I remember opening the first edition of the book, thinking about what bands might be talked about, going to the index and finding Philadelphia, and basically only seeing the one story about Black Flag playing here and a bunch of locals from Kensington running them out of town. That's what we get. That was it.
At least it makes the city look badass! Although I said that I didn't enter the project with any thesis that I wanted to put forward, one of the ideas that I had was that there was never a defined Philly sound, which worked for and against the city. Unlike DC hardcore or NY hardcore, where you had an idea what it was going to be, there wasn't going to be this built-in audience for that type of music. At the same time it fostered a certain creativity because the bands had an individual sound.

So, you know, for and against. Probably mostly against in terms of recognition but for in terms of creativity. Also against because a lot of these bands didn't release that many records and therefore didn't reach their full creative potential. But maybe it was better that they were cut short at an early age before they did the bad metal record or the funk record.

MRR: There're a lot of active people on this list of interviews but there's also quite a number who haven't been directly involved with punk and hardcore for a very long time. I think that nostalgia is fine but that it's just as important if not more so to not harp on the past and to always be moving forward.
Nostalgia can be a form of respect and honor. You can learn from [the past] but not live in it because life continues. You have no choice. So that's why I want a spread of different voices so it's not all a journey into "the glory days."

MRR: I think that is the hallmark of a good interview is when they're honest and not revisionist and they say, "I was around in those days and it sucked. We had to deal with so much bullshit. I wouldn't trade it for anything cause it's my life and that's what happened but I'm not going to sugarcoat everything and talk about how the kids of today suck."
I feel like I caught the tail end of the glory days of the '80s and they weren't glorious to me. I could go to Club Pizzaz and I saw some amazing bands and was around really interesting people but there was so much that I hated and felt uncomfortable with that it inspired the things I later did, like Cabbage Collective, in reaction to the glory days of the '80s which was filled with violence, stupid people, shitty clubs, and Nazi skinheads.

All this crap is never going to be a golden, marvelous time for me. It was something that I felt, as a person with a fucking brain, that I had to react to and create an alternative to. I wanted to create an alternative to the alternative because from reading, say, *Maximum Rocknroll* and lyrics from different politically charged bands, I had very idealistic vision of what punk was going to be when I first started going to shows. And I found often that it wasn't that. It was people beating the crap out of each other and drinking and doing lots of drugs and spare changing and none of that had any appeal to me. It was the antithesis of what drew me in. I wanted something that was progressive and artistically vibrant.

So, glory days, yes, some of the shows were great but they also needed to be done in a different way.

MRR: Something that I always try and stress to people who are younger than me is that while they might have missed some bands and there's this tendency to glorify the past, like we're talking about, they'll be going to shows now that in five years will be be just as legendary.

It's nice to care about that. When I talk to some of these older people and they tell me they saw, I don't know, Upright Citizens or Jimi Hendrix then I'm in awe of that as well. And, you know, you can see the person kinda smile because I'm so excited about this experience that they had. It's a universality.

MRR: I recently had a thread going on Facebook where I asked people about their first concert and their first more DIY/punk show and it was interesting to see what bands came up over and over again. Numerous people saw Weird Al and The Monkees together in 1987 or something like that. More importantly, I thought it was great that [Loud! Fast! Philly! interviewees] Chuck Meehan (YDi) and Johnpaul Golaski (WKDU) both saw Lou Reed as their first show. Chuck saw him in 1974 and Johnpaul ten years later. I'm absolutely sure that those shows were completely, completely different experiences. Can you imagine the collection of criminals, misfits, and weirdos at a Lou Reed concert in 1974?!

Last question, and it's related to that: at this point what you're doing is basically being a historian. Should other people be doing oral histories of their scene? Why is this project important? Because I can see younger punks basically dismissing it as a bunch of old farts talking about the good old days.

And likewise older people are going to say, "Oh, these kids, they weren't there in 82, they don't know."

MRR: Like the two Philly punk comps from the '80s—it's either: *That Was Then This Is Now* or *Get Off My Back: We're Doing It Ourselves*. Both of those slogans work well for that.

I want to hit the sweet spot of the person who's open minded enough regardless of their age to listen to different people's life experiences. I would also encourage other people to do this. I know that I would listen. I have an interest in history. I have an interest in underground music. So if someone told me that they were doing, say, Loud! Fast! Minneapolis! I'd be, like, "Oh the guy from Profane Existence is there and I'm going to listen!" I would want to hear it because although I don't have any direct connections I still think it would have lots of interesting stories to listen to.

MRR: I think that's the good and bad about music journalism a lot of the time. The stuff that I hate is the "guitar tone" interviews where it's just so focused on the music that there is absolutely no background, no nuance, no personality, and really just no context. And that kind of writing definitely only focuses on the famous musicians and screw anyone else.

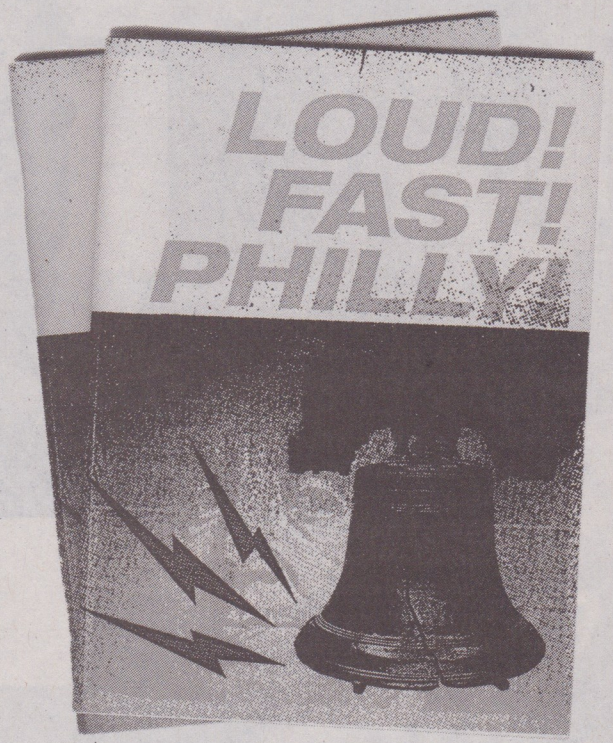
Most of that kind of crap I really don't give a fuck about. I'm really more interested in people's stories; the technical aspects in terms of the music are not that interesting to me. I don't even like all of the bands of the people that I interview.

MRR: When you contact people and ask them for an interview, are they surprised that you want to talk to them? I ask because a huge chunk of this project is made up of stories that have never been told before.

I think a lot of it's that these are not the people who have been interviewed over the years by others. There were fewer avenues for this in the past. And if it's something in the present, they may not be interviewed because their thing is not the hottest part of the scene that they're involved in. You can essentially interview anybody and find something interesting about them. While you can assume that the members of The Dead Milkmen have great stories and are really, really funny—and they are—what about this other band who peaked in the early '80s and broke up?

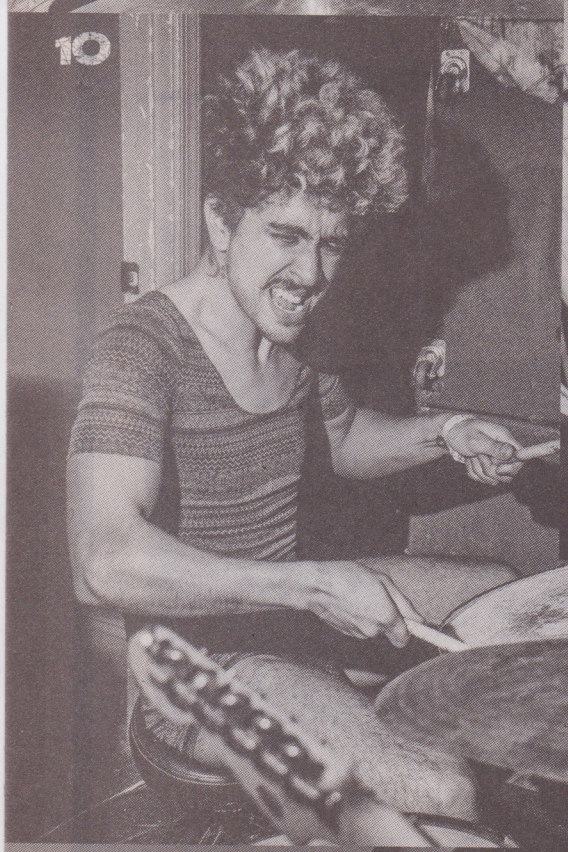
That being said, some people have asked me why certain people from certain bands haven't been interviewed and there's a whole world of dumb involved in hardcore that's never been interesting to me, I've never paid any attention to it because I've thought everything that's come out of it has been stupid. I could talk to stupid people but rather than wasting my time and then putting dumb ideas and the ideas of imbeciles out into the world I've just completely ignored them.

You can listen to Loud! Fast! Philly! interviews online at loudfastphilly.com.



Most of the interviews have accompanying portraits of their subjects taken by Karen Kirchhoff. Zines featuring these remarkable photographs can be purchased for $10. Write to karenkirchhoff at gmail.com with inquiries.

Pictured in the previous spread, clockwise from top left: Jim Shomo, Timmy Dunn, Policy of Three, Chuck Treece (McRad) Julia Factorial, Rob Fitzpatrick (Sickoids, Witch Hunt), Jackyl (YDI), The Fiends.



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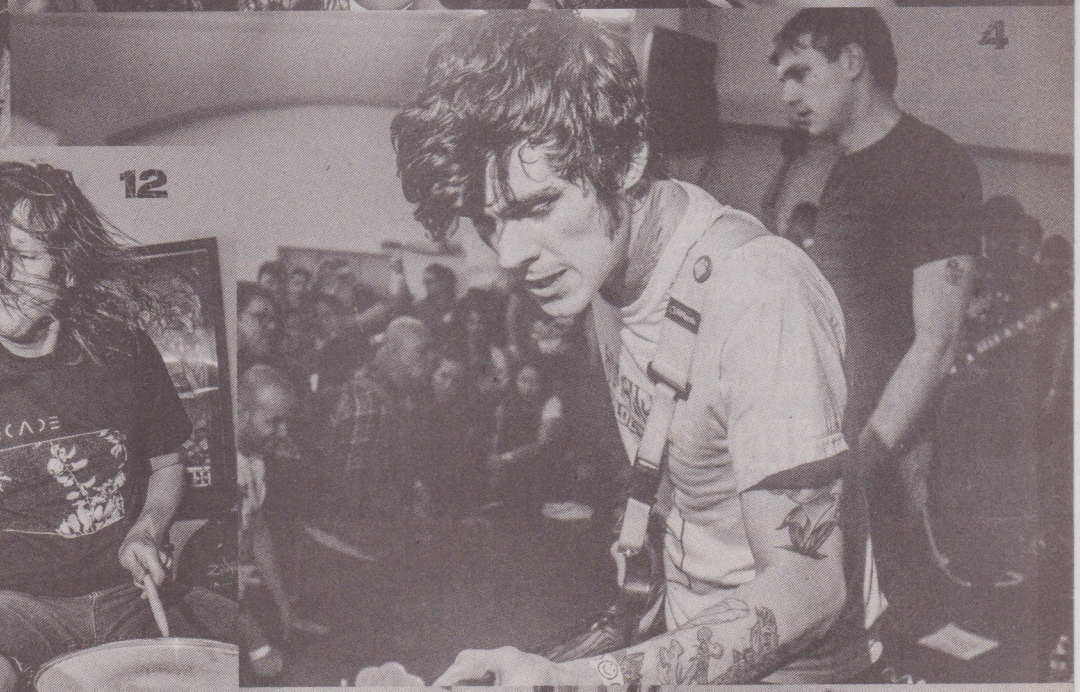

1. Blazing Eye 2. Arms Race 3. Government Warning 4. Ajax 5. Leather Daddy 6. Pure Disgust 7. Hounds of Hate 8. Suicidas 9. Urbanoia 10. Freak Vibe 11. Career Suicide 12. Nervosas

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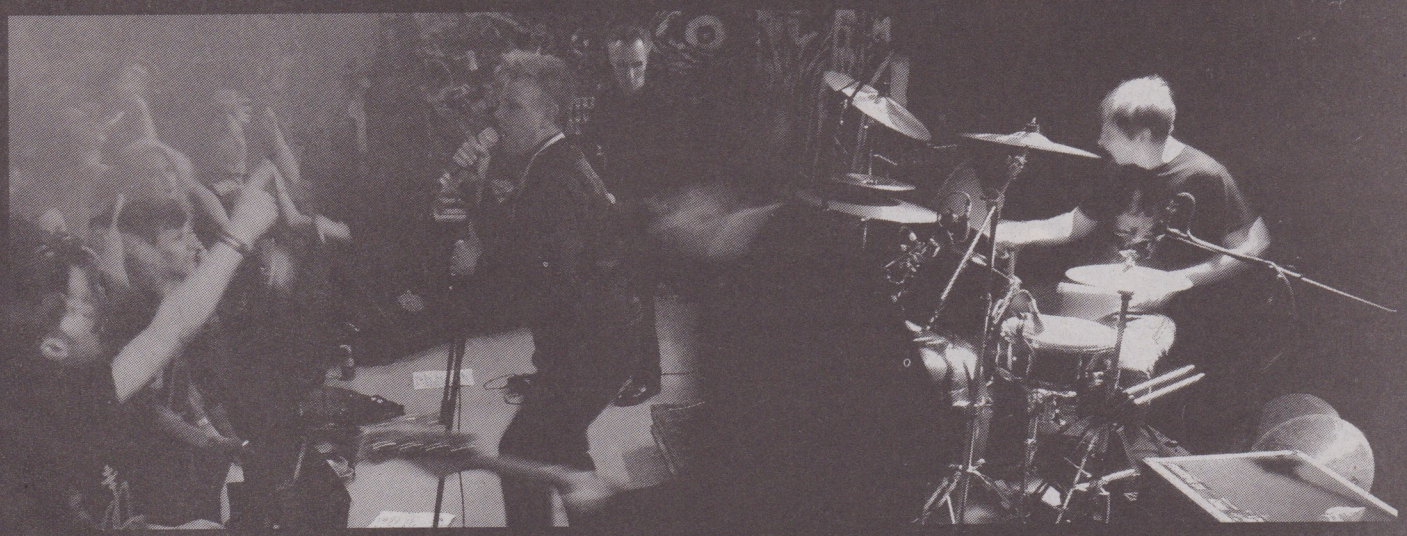
PART 1



Part 1 was one of the stranger bands attached to the anarcho-punk scene of early '80s England. Driven by guitarist Mark Ferelli's penchant for gothic horror, flanger pedals, and singer Jake Baker's bloodcurdling shouts, the band managed to snub label interest from Crass and Alternative Tentacles during its initial three year run. Part 1 did, however, appear on Pushead's Pusmort label in the mid-'80s and was first noticed by many Americans with their songs on the Cleanse the Bacteria *compilation (Pushead also released the posthumous* Pictures of Pain *mini-LP on his label in 1985). Listeners originally mistook the band for a gloomy side project of Rudimentary Peni, and the band does have substantial ties to that better-known band. Ian Glasper's 2007 interview with Part 1's Mark Ferelli for the seminal* The Day the Country Died: A History of Anarcho Punk from 1980 to 1984 *brought the band to the attention of a new generation of punks, deathrockers, and assorted weirdos. As with Amebix, Vex, and several other once obscure dark anarcho-punk bands, the internet and its buzzing hive of message boards and file sharing stoked interest in the shadowy, distant group. Fan interviews with Part 1's members began to surface online, which snowballed into the current reformation of the group with original lead singer Jake Baker, guitarist and founder Mark Ferelli, David Barnett of Adam and the Ants on bass, and Chris Low of the Apostles and Oi Polloi on drums. The Mob's All the Madmen label has remastered and reissued the* Pictures of Pain *mini-LP, which came out in late January, while the New York's Sacred Bones is set to reissue the seminal* Funeral Parade. *Drummer Chris Low has assumed stewardship of the band's online presence and has greatly helped marshal the band into the bright light of day. Introduction and interview by Oliver Sheppard. Photos by Olga Zarutskaya & Des Hoskins.*

MRR: Can you list who was in the original lineup of Part 1, and how long that era of the band lasted? Who's in Part 1 now, and what year did that got started?

Jake Baker: The original lineup consisted of me, Mark, Chris Pascoe, and Bob Leith. We were all at school together but never really knew each other until forming the band in the summer of 1980. The current lineup consists of me and Mark but with a new drum and bass department, Chris Low and Dave Barnett. This final chapter was born only fifteen months ago!

Mark Ferelli: There were various spiteful, playful episodes during that time when each one of us got the ejector seat due to some petty argument or other, but on the whole, we hit a lengthy period of stability from late 1980 to late 1982, a time that covered most of the gigs and the three studio sessions, two of which were ultimately released on vinyl. Jake did vacate his post in October 1982, leaving me to grapple vocal duties and guitar, which surprisingly was a success and did enable us to carry on as a three-piece, though alas we never made the studio in that particular incarnation. It did see us through until April 1983 and the subsequent personality implosion which killed us off after a last gig at the 100 Club with the Subhumans.

Possessed by what I can only describe as a brain fever in 2009, I had yearning thoughts as to some ungodly unearthing of Part 1, as I did feel a growing, irksome itch of unfinished business. The main problem of course was that I hadn't seen or had contact with the others for over twenty years and hadn't lifted a guitar for a similar span of time! But this did seem to add an almost perverse attraction to the notion, to see if something that unlikely could be done and brought back to some semblance of life. It eventually came as a surprise that all other original members, for a while at least, were well up for it, even keen despite the monstrous lapse of improbable time.

We began the rather lugubrious process of revisiting, stumbling through the material again, with Jake waiting patiently in the wings, while the three musical limbs struggled to find coordination in a large, wooden shed at the top of Bob Leith's garden, somewhere in the pedestrian suburbs of South London.

Having not touched music-making together in over 25 years, it was rather an eerie, uncanny surprise how quickly it all seemed to fall into place again! Chris Pascoe had been prolific in session work and production for those intervening decades. Bob Leith was a battle-hardened veteran of many bands over the years, known largely as drummer for cult UK band the Cardiacs. I suppose their generous presence carried me through until I sorted out the settings of my flanger!

Unfortunately, due to various life commitments outside the band, things began to unravel as we sporadically worked on getting it together enough to perhaps play a few gigs and even record again. Bob and later Chris made an exit, though to be fair, their participation at that stage was vital to the later success of this unearthing. Still, fortune shone a rictus grin as around that time. Chris Low, formerly of the Parkinsons and anarcho-punk legends the Apostles, had made himself known to me as an enthusiast of the band. Aware of

these growing troubles, Chris was more than keen to settle on the vacant drum stool, claim it as his own, and bring a whole new energy and dynamic to Part 1. Chris recommended David Barnett as a possible bass replacement, a seasoned veteran from the Boyfriends and Adam and the Ants. Both me and Jake Baker as hoary old originals feel very blessed by this current alliance.

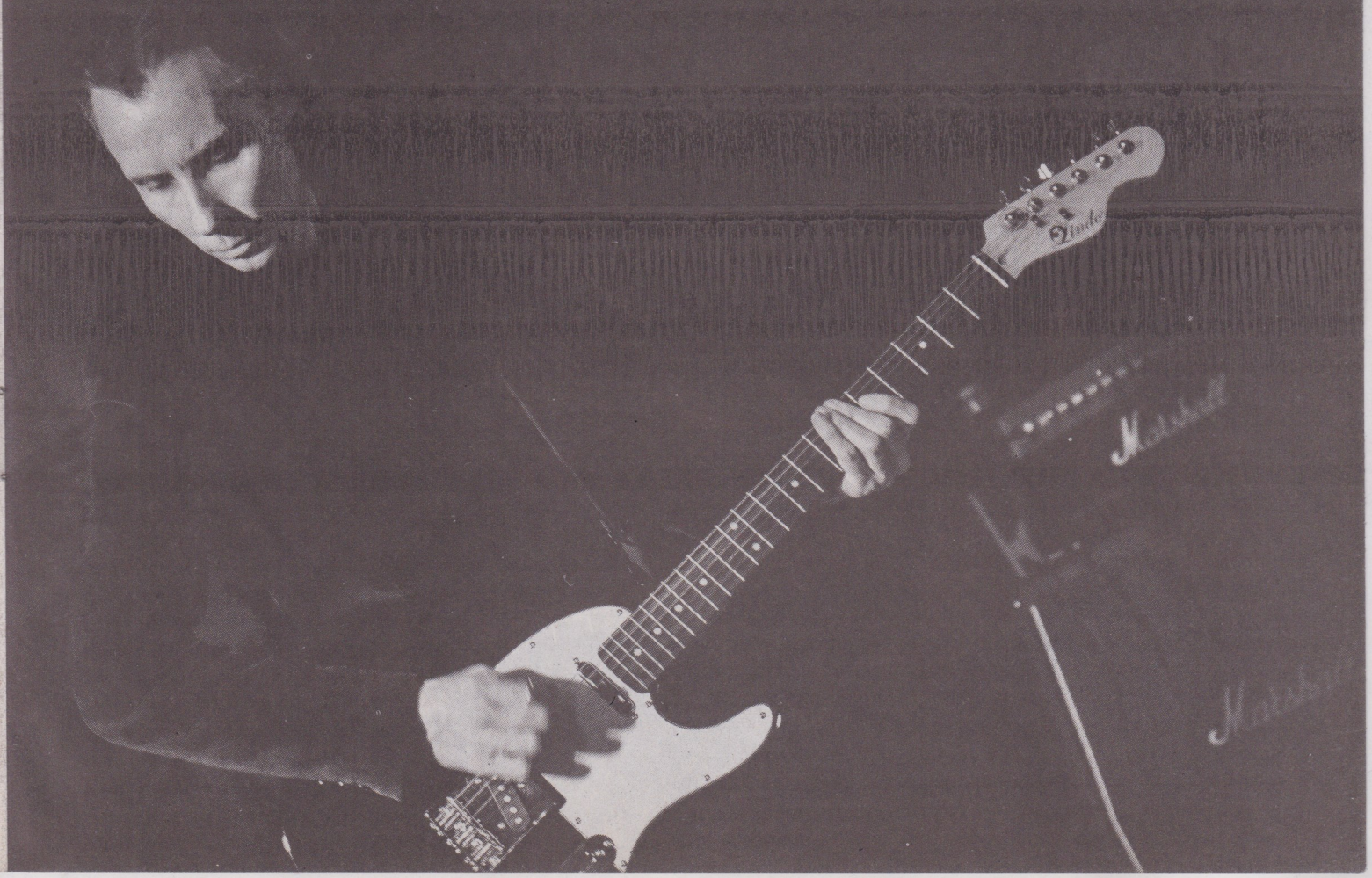
MRR: What was the main impetus behind the reformation of the band? It seems like a lot of bands like Amebix were surprised to discover they had a following on the internet consisting of people that would have never heard the band during its first go-round. Was any of this at play in the decision to get Part 1 back together?

Jake: For me there had always been a small flame smoldering away deep in the cavity of my mind, as it never really ended back then. There was nothing official that Part 1 had split or finished. Like most of the bands then, you often wondered what happened to them. It was only when things popped up on the internet from time to time related to Part 1, be it a write-up on the *Funeral Parade* EP or just a mention in a Rudimentary Peni article, that I was suddenly overwhelmed by this huge interest and love of the band and most importantly its music. It was around the time when Myspace was all the rage and I discovered a page dedicated to Part 1 and was curious who created it, so through this I made contact with Mark again after twenty years and we eventually met up at a UK Decay gig in their home town of Luton. After this we corresponded through email and managed to get Chris P. and Bob on board. After a few jam sessions, we hired a room in Tottenham and played the songs again.

Mark: For my part, I had really tried to ignore, even bury the whole memory of Part 1 throughout the intervening years as a result of that immature, premature break up all those eons past. In 2005, Ian Glasper approached me for a piece he wished to write on the band for his definitive anarcho-punk tome *The Day the Country Died*. Meanwhile, Martyn Trunt, a good friend of the band, had just excavated a recording of a gig from January 1982 at London's Autonomy Center, which I hadn't heard for nigh quarter of a century. It had quite a deep, galvanizing effect in terms of making me wonder if it were at all possible again, though I remained fearful that any such moves may just give the nauseous impression that we might all be sadly reaching for some lost bird of youth, or perhaps lost bat of youth in our case. Listening back to the material for purely selfish reasons I liked the idea of actually playing the damned songs again.

Later awareness that there were enthusiasts out there somewhere sharing the music gleaned from vinyl discs long out of print, writing some very complimentary and heartfelt things on the band, and even just bothering to remember Part 1 after such a vast length of time, conjured a peculiar disembodied set of feelings, rather like endlessly rereading one's own obituary.

MRR: Why the mysterious name Part 1? Who chose it and what does it mean?



Jake: Part 1 represented a new beginning from the bands that were before. I never like bands with "the" or "and the" in the name. Plus, it makes you wonder!

Mark: Ah! The name that is no name! It came about mainly as a form of reaction against the prosaic, overly descriptive names that seemed to proliferate the scene at that time—Slaughtered This and Anti-System-That. We wanted something neutral, cryptic and innocuous. I suppose prime influence on this approach was our slavish admiration of *Metal Box*-era Public Image Limited, with their kind of sardonic, faux-corporate branding, beneath which lurked something off-kilter, dangerous and unexpected. As to who came up with the name, it was a joint effort between me and Chris Pascoe, back in the January chill of 1980.

Chris: I like the way it's absolutely impossible to find Part 1 on the internet if you just enter the band's name and the only way you can ever find anything is if you add the record titles or some other detail. With so much information readily accessible via a few mouse clicks I like to think the people who find us have done so because they've made the effort to search us out.

MRR: Now that you're back together, will you be working on and recording new material or will you stick to playing the band's '80s catalog?

Jake: For the moment the old songs sound so much better than before and kind of have a new sound. I think they are probably just as relevant today as they were 30 years ago.

Mark: At this time we are determined to give the back catalog a maximum airing, for this material has slept in suffocation for too long! With something so familiar to us, there's a tendency to think the world and its dog has heard it all already, when the majority of folk are coming to Part 1 for the first time. And with the coming reissues of the original recordings happening now, we are keen to play the current set literally to death! But yes, we are working on new material for when everyone is sick to the back teeth with the classics.

Chris: Also, there a few songs in our set which were never recorded first time around, so unless you saw the band in the early '80s you'd never have heard them. "Claws" and "Death is in the Eye of the Beholder" are two that we fully intend to record for a single in 2015.

MRR: The original run of the band seems to have been marked a lot by missed opportunities or bad accidents of fate. Can you talk a little bit about the interest Crass had in "Marching Orders," and the interest Jello Biafra and Alternative Tentacles showed in the band, and why none of that ever worked out?

Mark: Crass very kindly wanted to include "Marching Orders" on their second *Bullshit Detector* compilation. Problem I had was that the sound and material that the band were performing at that time was far removed from this very derivative "punk rant" number, born from our formative period. We had in fact sent them that particular demo over a year before, and with things taking an age, by the time their offer arrived I just felt it didn't represent the band at all, so we declined. Now of course I am a little grieved we turned it down as it would have been nice to have appeared on that bit of vinyl anarcho-punk history! Please put that down to the pig-headed narcissism of youth!

Jello did show some keen interest in a letter to me in 1985, just prior to the Pusmort release of *Pictures of Pain*. Problem then was that the band had disintegrated two years before and to be honest, I was far from being on speaking terms or any contact at all with any other members. I felt very antagonistic and resentful toward the whole thing, even the fairly recent memory of it brought me out in hives. Of course, it only took me 25 years to get over that, and hundreds of pounds worth of therapy, by which time I think dear Jello had given up on waiting for a reply. Though I did have the chance to finally meet and apologize to him at the 2014 Rebellion Festival in Blackpool. I think he's forgiven me!

MRR: How did the band come into contact with Pushead? What is the story behind the* Pictures of Pain *release?

Mark: The alliance with Pushead arrived via Nick Blinko of Rudimentary Peni who was in the midst of a lengthy mail correspondence with him, sharing artwork and swapping discs across the Atlantic. Nick passed my details on to Pushead and we embarked on a similar art-death-obsessed discourse, with the band finding great favor among his various enthusiasms. This initially was throughout 1982. Sometime in 1984, with Pushead still very enthusiastic about the band, I gave him the seven tracks of our second demo *In The Shadow Of The Cross*, recorded in April 1981 and previously released as a cassette on our own Semen Tapes label. My interest in it all was pretty less than zero, feeling rather bitter still about the break-up, so when these recordings saw light of day as *Pictures of Pain* a year later in the USA, I didn't even contact him for a copy, such was my antipathy. Of course, in retrospect, the band are so grateful to the legendary Pus for having done so, as it kept the memory of the material moving within the mass consciousness, ears, and imaginings of others over many years and rescued Part 1 from total obscurity.

MRR: I think like a lot of people I first learned about Part 1 from folks who were hardcore fans of Rudimentary Peni, and I think to a lot of people the two bands are associated to the degree some people even think the bands shared members, or that Nick Blinko was in Part 1! Can you explain the relationship of Part 1 to Rudimentary Peni? Blinko did some artwork, and he and Grant Matthews helped pay for the first EP or something, didn't they? What was that relationship all about and are there any strange stories about it?

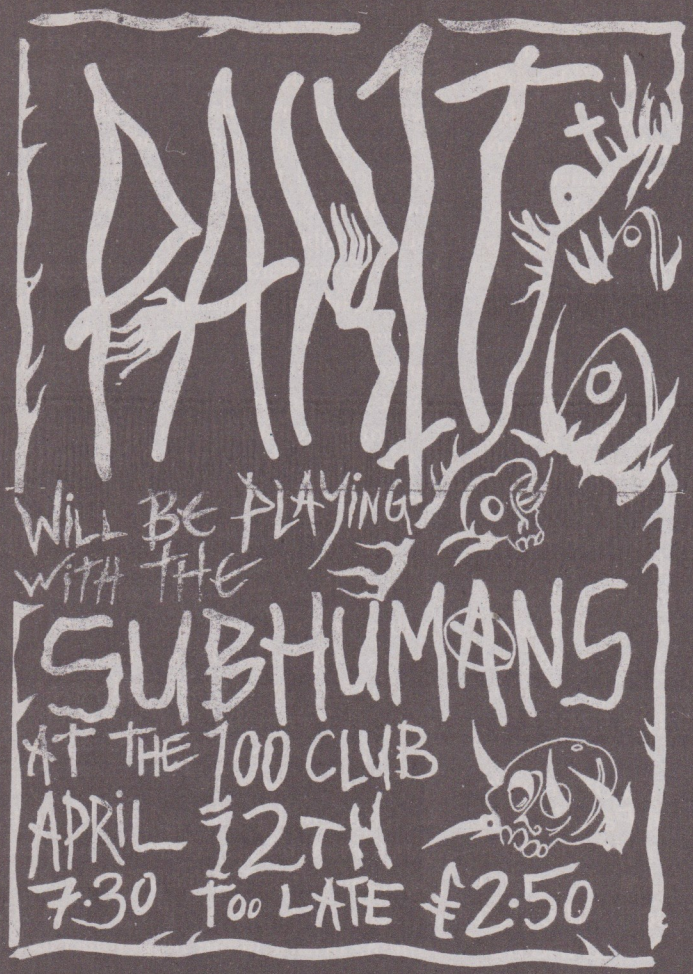
Mark: It was really a familial kind of thing, a relationship for the bands at that time in the midst of an energetic but very formulaic anarcho-punk scene, with us both standing out like the proverbial sore thumb amidst the conflicting clones of various shades and shapes. There was a kinship of sorts as like minds, primarily fused around the "art death house morbidity drive" of Blinko and Ferelli, a dark, intense outlook shared that seemed the engine of both bands. I think we were viewed as aberrations in that scene, and like Peni, no doubt confusing to some. It was a brief bond that gave us strength and succor in the spotty, solvent-sniffing face of what was generally going on.

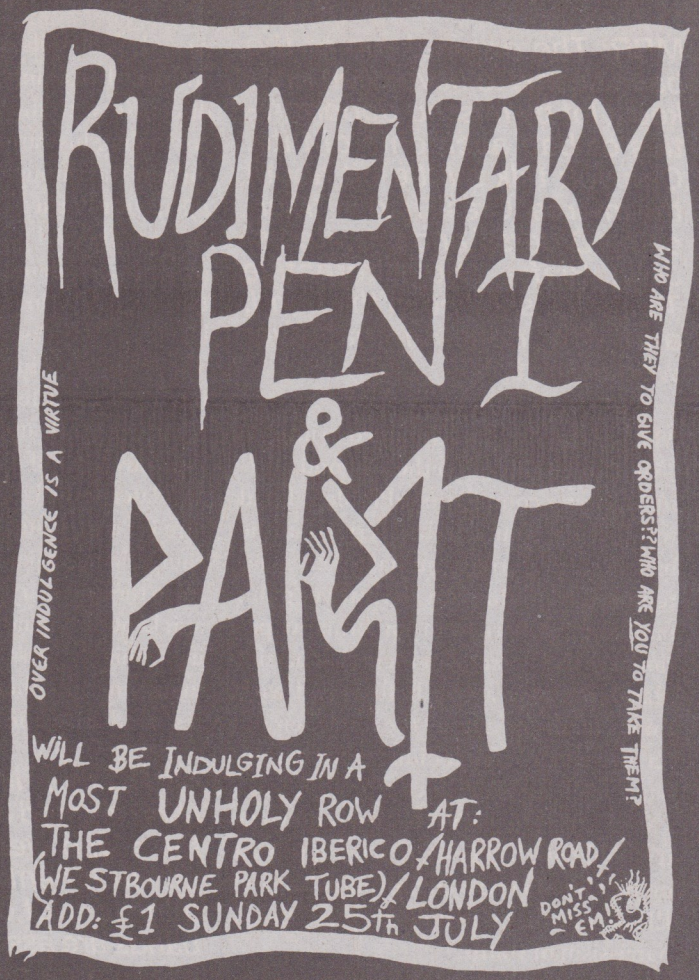
Some have said that we resemble Peni sound-wise, but I think that's pretty lazy listening. Understandable though, I suppose, in light of a general ignorance on the chronology of things between the two bands. But no, we never played with each other's members [*laughs*], just a bunch of gigs and some weirdling brotherly warmth, chummy, irksome camaraderie, especially between me and Nick, as we were devoted in urgency to outdo the other in terms of artistic gruesomeness, horror, and gasp.

Both Nick and Grant did help us with a bit of cash from the Penile coffers to enable that 1982 pressing of the *Funeral Parade* EP on our own Paraworm Records. During that first existence of the band, I took an unholy pride in all my various artworks and graphics, seeing such as a vital element of attack alongside the lyrics and music, and still very much do. Two years after our demise, Nick did some remarkable stuff for the 1985 Pusmort release of *Pictures of Pain*. Especially good moribund fun is his wasp label for that release, a rather wonderful dig at me by the Master Macabre, who oft referred to me as that astringent, stinging beastie in our numerous pieces of written correspondence.

MRR: Can you give some impressions or comments on your own involvement in the '80s UK anarcho-punk scene? How did folks in that scene respond to Part 1's imagery and music? How big or small was that scene? People tend to re-historicize or romanticize things and imagine they were much larger or more popular movements than they really were, as with '80s US hardcore. What was it like trying to do a band like Part 1 in that culture?

Jake: To be honest, I wasn't aware of any scene at the time. We were just making music that was original, that we loved, and that was all. We got involved with the anarcho-punk scene by chance really. We were sick of the general apathy where we lived and nobody liked us or cared for what we were doing, so we came to London when the Anarchy Centre opened and found ourselves embraced in this culture that to this day made a difference.





Mark: With the death of popular, commercial punk and its big name brands, a credible subterranean scene took hold with its ethics and inspiration being very much based around the Crass model. There was a great emphasis on DIY and a countywide network of bands, fanzines and gig organizers, communicating regularly through an antiquated postal system. For all its many other problems now, Britain was a fairly grim isle in the late '70s and very early '80s, fast in the grip of the Thatcher years, with the views of the establishment firmly held by most people in an unquestioning way, ready, perhaps as always, to utilize violence to press home their bigoted point. The UK felt very insular and seemed to pride itself on fantasies of world superiority and racism, so there was a lot to be angry about and kick against, resulting in a lot of sincere and heartfelt emotion in the anarcho-punk scene that actually stretched beyond the entertainment value of the music. I think Part 1 found itself amid the movement as it seemed one of the few places best fit for outsiders and dissidents with a special morbid axe to grind about religious institutions!

People generally took to the deathly anguish and ruminations of the lyrics, the music, and the style of horror artwork with either great enthusiasm or complete apathy (by heading for the bar). I never saw we were doing anything that different but looking back I suppose it rather was!

Chris: What many people may not be aware of is that in the UK, when Crass and other bands associated with them were at their commercially successful peak, anarcho-punk didn't exist in the way it is understood now. Some of the releases on Crass Records and associated labels may have sold in sufficient quantities to get them in the charts and several of those acts could fill large venues, but as far as the actual scene back then, it was fairly small and very spread out and underground. Anarcho-punk as a genre term didn't really exist until around 1984. Before then there were the bands that were associated with and played at the anarchy centers that ran from 1980 till around 1982 like the Wapping Autonomy Centre, which was initially set up from the proceeds of Crass *Bloody Revolutions* single. The bands who played there were pretty much every act who became known as the originators of anarcho-punk: the Mob, Rudimentary Peni, the Apostles, Conflict, Omega Tribe, Dirt, etc. They became known as the anarchy center punk bands, or anarcho-punk bands. It's difficult to estimate the actual size of the scene. When I was doing my zine back then, I remember half the letters and tapes I'd receive were from places I'd never even heard of! It was an incredibly exciting secret world and alternative reality for a kid stuck in a small Scottish town to be part of, and I'd imagine that was the attraction for many others.

Obviously I can't comment on what it was like being in Part 1 back then, as at that time I was in Political Asylum and then the Apostles, but what I do recall is that Part 1 was regarded as pretty out there and extreme. This outsider image was obviously enhanced when word got about that Mark had been raided by the "Blasphemy Squad" for sending obscene anti-religious drawings in the post! I think I first wrote off to

the band after reading about them in some zine and was sent a copy of their *In The Shadow Of The Cross* demo and also a really weird solo tape Mark had done called *Onker the Dwarf*, which I either lost or taped over, though I did keep the cover as it was just so bizarre. Back then there were loads of anarcho-punk-type bands who were trying to come across as almost spiritual, espousing Taoism, Eastern philosophy, and the like. Part 1 came across as the total and utter opposite of that and I think I was always drawn to bands and music that was a bit dark and nasty.

MRR: The imagery and macabre themes of the band are the most striking and attention-grabbing aspects of Part 1, with song titles like "Ghost," "Incest," "Possession," "Black Mass," etc. Are these used as political allegory, or is there just a sheer fascination with horror there? What are the influences, literary or musical, that have helped shaped Part 1's sound and aesthetics? UK Decay, Siouxsie, Lovecraft?

Mark: I think you could say both, as lyrically the material carries a rage and disgust, especially in Jake's vocal delivery, while there is also a relentless, abrasive sensuality sound-wise amid the death and horror content that certainly made for an unusual concoction at that time. And yes, musically we would have to cite the usual suspects as being an influence then, but it's worth remembering that those songs were written over thirty years ago, so the listening for me now in any new writing is far more eclectic. But there will always be certain things on the Banshees "Join Hands" that will haunt me to my coming grave and probably the next. I was always a big fan of Magazine, who always had something clever about them, yet retained a sardonic edge. In the literary stakes, always Howard Phillips Lovecraft and Arthur Machen. I take daily worship at the shrine of "Archaic" Al Hewetson, macabre mad mind-beloved of the Skywald Horror-Mood. To confess, I did lift the title of one of our numbers from issue 13 of *Nightmare* magazine!

MRR: What has been the reaction at shows to the new Part 1? Have audiences been receptive?

Mark: The whole experience has been very positive and the reception was excellent.
Chris: I think the one we were most unnerved about playing was Scumfest in London, when we had to go on last after eight hours of blistering crust, D-beat and grindcore. The band before us was Raw Noise, who were members of Extreme Noise Terror or something, and we were all at the side of the stage with our heads in our hands when it was time to go on, like "Fucking hell, the crowd are gonna *hate* us!" But that ended up as one of the most enjoyable gigs we've ever played and the organizers said we received one of the best reactions of all the festival.

***MRR: How did the reissues of* Funeral Parade *and* Pictures of**

Pain *come about? How do they differ from the original versions?*

Mark: *Pictures of Pain* came out on All the Madmen in January 2015. It will be a new, very much improved package, including the original front cover artwork by Deborah Valentine, the original back sleeve art with its weird masochistic ink rendering by Nick Blinko, and this time I've actually managed to contribute artwork of my own! An eight-page lyric and art tome will accompany the 12" marble colored vinyl. The recording has been brilliantly remastered by Daniel Husain at the North London Bomb Factory. This limited pressing of 600 copies will also carry a download option to accompany the actual-factual print and plastic. We have been long admirers of the good folk at All the Madmen and are very pleased to have joined with them on this long overdue release.

As for *Funeral Parade*, our 1982 EP and the more elusive of sole two vinyl releases, we are equally excited to see its resurrection on the great Sacred Bones label, thanks entirely to the generous goodwill and enthusiasm of Caleb Braaten, who has been working diligently with me on this. It will take form as a 12" version of vinyl in gatefold sleeve of original illustration, complete with a hefty art zine of unpublished drawings and text, all contemporaneous to the period of the recording.

Chris: Another important factor is that the sound quality on the 12" pressing of *Funeral Parade* is immeasurably better, more powerful, and more malignant and claustrophobic than the 7" which always suffered from poor sound quality simply from trying to fit nearly ten minutes of music on each side of a 7" single. That's certainly the main difference for me, and that's speaking as someone who has been listening to the original 7" for over 30 years now. I was blown away by it then and I'm pleased to say I was even more blown away hearing the remastered mix, as I sometimes feel many of the recordings from the early '80s were very much of their time. Also, it's great to see the artwork in a larger format too. Another of the reasons for the delay in the release was we wanted to get the original artwork and it's certainly been worth it as the LP sleeve art by Nick Blinko and Deborah Valentine looks amazing. Much, much better than it did on the original release of the LP which lost a lot of the detail in reproduction.

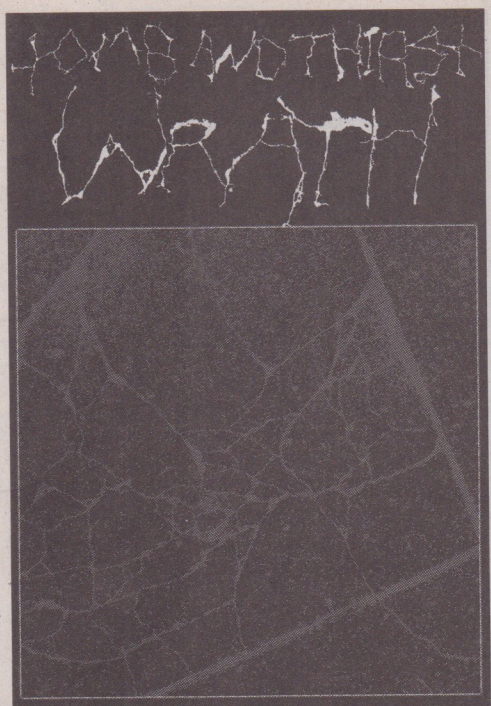
MRR: Culturally, I understand Part 1 were part of the anarcho-punk milieu, but musically the band doesn't sound like a lot of other bands (then again, few of the anarcho-punk bands sounded alike back then). Nowadays the band has attracted a gothic rock or deathrock crowd, though still attracting a lot of punks, too. What's your take on how the music and these scenes have evolved and where Part 1 stands amid it all?

Jake: I don't really know where Part 1 fit in, because we never wanted to! I suppose we were technically part of the anarcho-punk scene, although other bands had a completely different sound. I think that deathrock is probably more fitting nowadays.

Mark: For my part, I felt no small sense of trepidation that what we had to offer, originally, had long since been exceeded by others during the intervening years in terms of dark, sonic, morbid force and intensity, but I think the band still has a unique and recognizable element to it. I like the mix of the audience now much more than way back then as folk actually seem to enjoy listening! Of course, when the band had its birthing there wasn't really a gothic scene as such, merely strands and influences of things, like the Banshees drawing upon Poe in the lyric stakes. I think we may have had a marginal influence on others over recent years, and I read recently of a Latino strain of deathrock called horror punk. That sounds rather charming to me and I most certainly would have been in on it 30 years ago.

Chris: In the early to mid '80s, you could have gone to see the Mob or Rudimentary Peni in the same week as Theatre of Hate or Southern Death Cult, and just as anarcho-punk wasn't a genre term you heard back then, gothic wasn't really either, and I'd certainly never heard of deathrock until relatively recently. It was all just great, exciting music. If anything, the only collective identity of such bands was that they existed as an alternative to the Exploited and GBH, who emerged around the same time. Both camps had their roots in punk but expressed themselves in very different aesthetic and musical forms. I suppose the bands that are now regarded as the original gothic acts, like Bauhaus and UK Decay, were all influenced by punk in one way or another but experimenting with the music they were making and often trying to escape what were at the time becoming the boundaries and confines of punk. I always thought punk should be about not conforming and breaking barriers, and should still be about that today if it's to stand for anything.

Part 1 recently played some shows on the East Coast of the United States. Stay up to date on the band's actions at facebook.com/part.1.official



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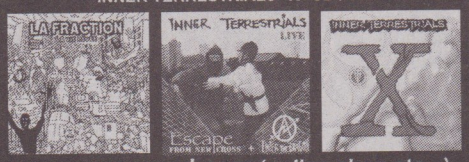

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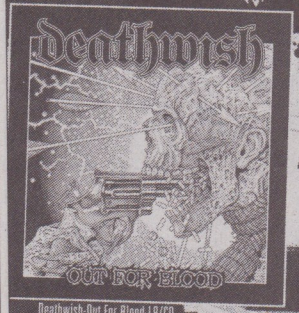

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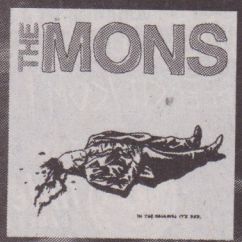

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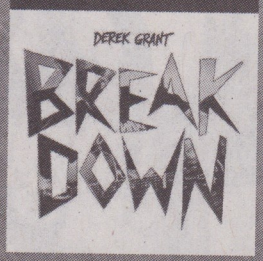

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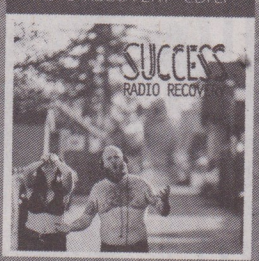

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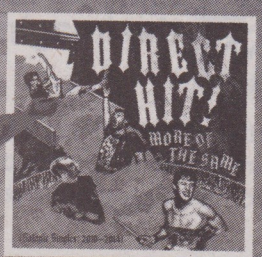

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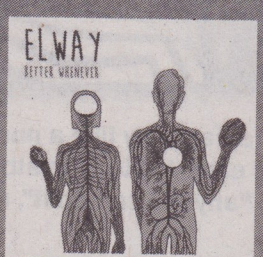

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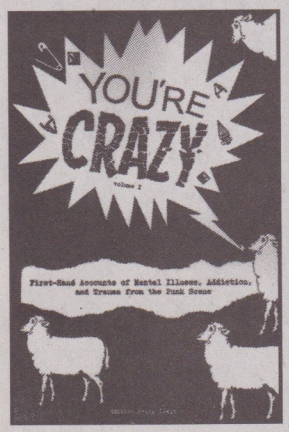

You're Crazy
By Craig Lewis
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In radical/transgressive communities, such as punk, the standard narrative has always been that there is a pretty high degree of inclusiveness for those of us who experience and deal with reality in an unusual manner—aka "mentally ill" or "crazy" people. Such communities often act as magnets for us, the misfits, potentially providing a place to belong when our own perceptions of the world don't necessarily line up with mainstream or "healthy" views of the same. This is the standard narrative, though in practice the ways that supposedly-inclusive communities deal with those who experience the world through unusual (often-difficult) mental states are complex and nuanced, and the results of this inclusiveness often end up closer to a reflection of broader societal stigmas than we'd like to admit.

The book series *You're Crazy: First-Hand Accounts of Mental Illness, Addiction, and Trauma from the Punk Scene* by Craig Lewis, a longtime Boston punk and mental health advocate, is a collection of first-hand accounts by other punks who describe their experiences and struggles with a variety of complicated mental conditions, both in punk and outside of it. Their perspectives are linked by themes including extreme anxiety, depression, drug addiction, abuse survival, psychosis, paranoia, panic attacks, and violent outbreaks (mostly self-directed but sometimes external). Many of the stories span years of experiences, and detail how the authors came to terms (or not) with the difficulties they have faced.

You're Crazy shows an important diversity of perspectives, because not all such differential mental conditions have equivalent effects/fallout, and they can have widely variable effects on individuals and communities—particularly when personally intimate individuals are dealing with their own mental conditions that are cross-indicative with each other (dangerous mixes). Some of the mental conditions people describe in this book are ones I have personally dealt with (such as extreme anxiety/panic/drug addiction), and others are conditions that I have suffered from through other people with whom I was co-dependent (such as bipolar disorder). In the wider world, these types of complexities are often swept under the rug. Depending on the individual(s) and their personal contexts (social/economic/racial/gender-based/etc.), we who suffer from mental issues can be overlooked, ignored or left to self-medicate, or are institutionalized and/or over-medicated on "approved" therapies, often ending up saddled with a strong, generalized negative stigma ("crazy"). As mentioned earlier, people who deal with these conditions often gravitate towards radical communities such as punk, only to find that despite a higher incidence of similarly-affected peers the stigmas persist, and there is often still a lack of visibility or willingness to openly deal with the problems these conditions can cause. Combined with counter-cultural resistance to "approved" therapies (often rife with their own problems), this can lead to dangerous self-medication, cycles of abuse, and extreme self-destructive behavior.

I suppose many of the stories in *You're Crazy* could be considered "triggering" for me, but I believe that the increased visibility of these struggles outweighs any temporary personal discomfort I may experience reliving them through someone else's eyes. The fact that this book exists, and that there is clearly a need for it to exist, is a demonstration that even in more inclusive/radical spaces and communities (such as punk) there is still a great deal of negative stigmatization that surrounds the mental conditions/struggles that the authors go to great pains to describe. We owe it to ourselves and our communities to not sweep these struggles under the rug, to understand how they relate to our own experiences, and how we can make them less difficult and painful for everybody involved.

—John Mink

Gimme Indie Rock: 500 Essential American Underground Rock Albums, 1981-1996
Andrew Earles
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The title of this book pretty much sums it up: reviews of 500 albums from 1981-1996 across a wide spectrum of bands from the so-called underground rock world. No 7"s are covered. Some reviews are a few sentences, some are a page and a half. If you're a superfan of a particular band, I'm sure you'll find things to nitpick about, but in general the reviews do a good job of putting the records in context to their timeframes and scenes, and giving a little background on the releases. To round out the era, there are some nice appendices on compilations, zines, documentaries and other odds and ends. And that's basically it.

Now about that title, starting with the word "essential." Throwing that word in opens the book to all kinds of ridicule. Of course the albums included are but one person's opinion, but why even say they are "essential"? "Important" may have been a better choice, or maybe no qualifier at all. I mean if one is going to listen to and review 500 albums, an impressive task in itself, it's almost implied that those reviews would lean towards the good ones. Who likes to write about bad records? Of course you can argue 'til the cows come home over records that were included or excluded. Secondly: "Underground Rock." I don't criticize that so much as want to explain that this book covers everything from hardcore, post-punk, and indie rock, to alternative rock, college rock, and lots of things in between. Though I question having a picture of Minor Threat on the cover, as the reviews are certainly more skewed towards indie rock than hardcore. Perhaps because they are arguably the most indie of the indies? Yes, Minor Threat is included as are Black Flag, Bad Brains, Negative Approach, Wipers, and a good chunk of the early SST catalog, but it leans more to the alternative rock of Codeine, Flaming Lips, Pavement, Pixies, Replacements, Sebadoah, and Superchunk. Also of note, the author has only included bands from the United States, so notable bands from Europe and elsewhere that helped define the era are missing (Cocteau Twins and My Bloody Valentine, to name but two), though I suppose you have to draw the line somewhere.

Overall, this is a fine timekiller. It certainly is not a book you'll read cover to cover, but instead, pick up, read a few entries and move on. If your record collection is mostly filled with the catalog of Prank, Lengua Armada, or Havoc, then you may not find much interest in this book. But if you are one to cast your net much wider and would like to get a good cross section of the indie music of this era, then you may enjoy perusing it and might even discover a new record or two. In fact, with so many online streaming services available now, the real joy of the book is as a guide to picking a few random albums and giving them a listen.

—Mark Dober

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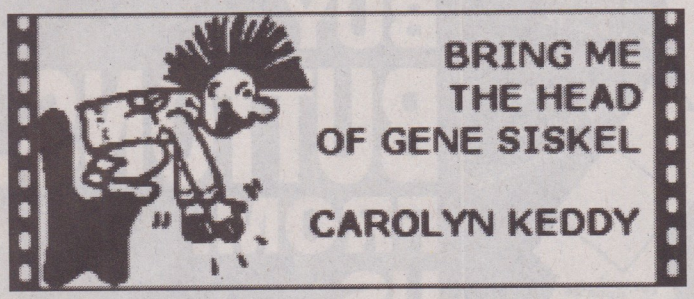
MOVIES



It is getting harder for me to go to a movie theater. I'm not just talking about movies sucking. Although I have been sitting on two sets of passes for different theater chains for two years and five months respectfully. Nor am I talking about how movie crowds suck. We all know they do. It is just when there is actually a film I want to see in a theater, the logistics keep making it more difficult to be able to see it.

Here's what happened. I am on the e-mail list for my local art theater. I got a message that Hal Hartley's latest film **Ned Rifle** would be showing there the first week of April. I added it to my calendar, told my friends and made plans to see it Monday after work. It was only showing once per day. The Monday showing was at 7pm which was perfect since I work six blocks from the theater. I meet up with my friend only to find out the projector broke so they can't show the film. What can you do? Stuff happens. I'll go see it the next day. However they weren't showing it on Tuesday. The next and final showing was 9pm on Wednesday. I work Wednesday nights, but I set out to see if I could leave early. After some attempts at negotiations, I decided to check the theater website to make sure it was actually going to screen. They moved it up to 7pm so I am out of luck.

I ended up doing what every modern, sensible minded person would do. I paid the director through his website so I could stream the film on Vimeo. Now I am afraid this is my first choice for movies. Forget the hassle of checking times and going to the theater. Of course, not everyone does it this way, but they should. I am especially hinting at all the punk documentary makers whose films play once and then there is a long wait for a DVD release (if one ever happens). I paid $4.95 to watch **Ned Rifle** on my not-so-big screen TV, but on my comfortable couch. It was more convenient and less expensive. I even watched the film a second time the next day before my twenty-four hour rental ran out.

Ned Rifle is the third film in the trilogy that started with **Henry Fool** in 1997, followed by **Fay Grim** in 2006. Both films have been previously reviewed in this column. Check your archives. I decided to revisit the previous two as a primer for **Ned Rifle**. Watching the three as a series was a surprisingly cohesive affair considering Hartley didn't intend for there to be sequels to **Henry Fool**.

In **Ned Rifle,** the title character is the son of Henry and Fay. Henry left for Sweden in the first film and then for Russia is the second film. Fay is in jail for treason after tricking multiple countries' governments and assisting Henry's escape, as well as giving him back his notebooks containing his novel "The Confession". Ned is living in witness protection with a minister, his wife and two children. He has become a devout Christian, but on his eighteenth birthday when he is allowed to leave he decides he needs to go find his father and kill him. The minister of course tries to dissuade Ned, but his mind is made up.

The story unfolds slowly reintroducing characters from the other films. Ned visits his mom in prison where she is making the best of it. She is doing yoga and writing her autobiography with the help of a ghostwriter. His Uncle Simon, his mother's brother, is getting away from the poetry that made him such a celebrity and is starting to do stand-up comedy. He is not good at it. Simon has figured out where Henry is so Ned is off with a new friend Susan in tow.

Ned Rifle plays like a thriller, but without all the over the top drama I am used to seeing in Hollywood thrillers. Everyone has their own agenda and is willing to do whatever to get what they want. Each character's past is a bit more complicated than anyone else expects. The ending is a completely satisfying conclusion to this trilogy. (halhartley.com)

I did manage to see one film in the theater this month. **What We Do In The Shadows** is a comedy about vampires living in New Zealand. Four vampires from different centuries share a house and the usual roommate nonsense happens. It reminds me of the British TV show **The Young Ones** although these four have more in common since they are all vampires. The mundanities of life are the most amusing. I would never think that vampires would worry about washing dishes, vacuuming the hallway or the average stuff most people do every day. They even have a chore wheel that hasn't moved in hundreds of years.

Of course the vampires of **What We Do In The Shadows** have to go out and find victims. They need to eat. They stalk the stretch of town where all the bars and clubs are. As vampires they aren't able to enter any place without being invited in and the doormen seem to be on to them so they won't invite them. Surprisingly they are not the only group of vampires in town. There are a lot of vampires in Wellington.

The oldest of the vampires, Petyr, makes the mistake of transforming one his victims Nick into a vampire so now a newbie from this century has joined the group. With him comes a new set of problems. He brags to everyone he meets that he is a vampire and has brought a friend who is still a regular guy to hang out at the house. The older vampires are constantly annoyed with his idiocy, but then he introduces them to the internet. Viago likes to watch the sunrise on the computer because he can never actually look at one.

Things start getting too over the top with a rivalry with some werewolves and the return of an ex-girlfriend. However the subtle humor and the ridiculousness of it all keep **What We Do In The Shadows** enjoyable to the end. (whatwedointheshadows.com)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, Maximum Rocknroll, *PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com*

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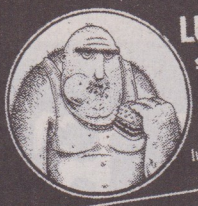

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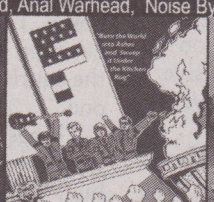
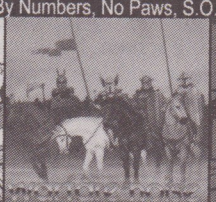
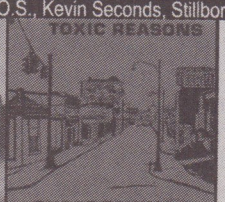

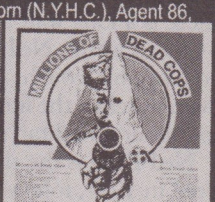

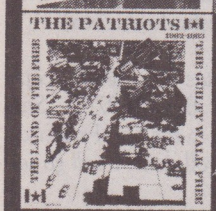

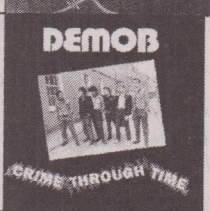

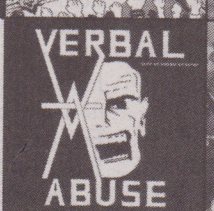

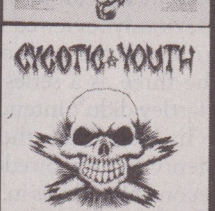

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ACTIVATIONS – "Radio On/Attack" EP

'70s rock'n'roll style party punk. ACTIVATIONS churn out three non-stop jams on this release. Super fuzzy yet still catchy guitar riffs and blown-out high pitched vocals add to the frantic uppers-fueled party tones on all these songs. "Why Why Why" is a bit slower and more melodic than the other two songs, but is by no means a ballad. Any of these songs could have been on the *Somebody Got Their Head Kicked In!* comp. Get at this for a good time. (KC)
(Big Neck)

ASHKENAZI – "Nature of the Beast" EP

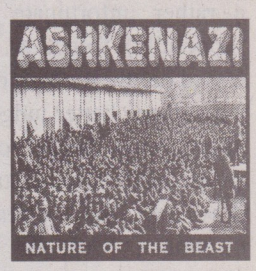
What a hard record. I mean, *hard*. Not in a beatdown type way either, but very much like this could be a lost LEEWAY EP from right before *Born to Expire*. The music is grooving and the vocals are delivered with a high-pitched yell that totally reminds me of them. The tempo ranges from furious blastbeats ("Mentality") to knuckle-dragging breaks. What's really interesting about this band is their choice of imagery. "Ashkenazi" references a geographically oriented practice of Judaism (Jews from Eastern Europe) that Jews from certain areas align themselves with. The band makes it very clear that it does not act as an apologist for the state of Israel but supports, "the plight of the Palestinian people." I feel like the goal of this record is to recognize all struggles (surely the wounds of the shoah are still felt in Jewish communities across the globe, as the continued violence against the Palestinian people by the state of Israel is felt by many whose families are effected by it) and serves as a way to reconcile all marginalized peoples struggles, while recognizing that "Jew" does not equal Zionist. This seems to be an ever more important distinction in the 21st century as well—the notion that because of your Jewish heritage, you are somehow automatically in support of Israeli actions/imperialism. The crux of this record, for me at least, is "Blackened Mind." "Hearts of men hatred grows / A passion lost, blood runs cold / He points the gun, blackened mind/ Five million ninety nine / to go." The message transcends any particular people or instance in history and is indicative of all struggles, even if the name is not. This is a sick record. (MW)
(Use Your Head)

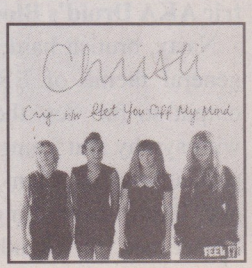
BIOFEEDBACK – "Karamihan Nao Ay Pu" EP

This is an interesting 1992 demo from the Philippines. They're described in the liner notes as having a "street oriented" sound coming from "ordinary underclass kids," which sounds about right to me. From that perspective, I have an easier time avoiding comparisons and listening/learning with a fresh ear. What I hear is four tracks of mid-tempo hardcore with fuzzy guitars and an honest tone, lacking the superficial toughness that usually comes through with this style. Many folks chasing contemporary punk/hardcore trends probably won't connect with this, but "anthropological Western punks" (like me) will hopefully be drawn to it. You won't be disappointed. Very cool. (MA)
(Mutilated Noise)

THE BLIND SHAKE – "Fly Right" LP

Man. I totally remember going to see JON SPENCER BLUES EXPLOSION and thinking it was the greatest orgasm-inducing thing I'd seen in forever. The drugs were right. The company was good. Next time it was like, "What the fuck am I thinking watching this bozo in shiny pants?!" Well this stuff is pretty JON SPENCER along with the CRAMPS, SPITS and...whatever. It's reeeeeaal shiny and pretty but could leave you real squishy and uncomfortable when the dope wears off. I guess it comes down to whether these folk can deliver live for me. Remains to be seen but worth checking out. (RO)
(Slovenly Records)





BOOM BOOM KID – "Armagedon" flexi

Argentina's most famous export, BOOM BOOM KID earned his legion of fans from his band(s)'s ecstatic live performances. Readers of this magazine may mostly appreciate his catchy, melodic punk songs, but this EP is given over to one of his other, non-rock'n'roll styles. "Engreida Trash" was my favorite, with its mild, distorted guitar laid over sing-alongable vocals. In lieu of a rhythm section is the gentle tap of the drum machine. The other three songs are full-on electronica—some pleasant and innocuous sounding, some sparse—serving as a backdrop to his vocals. The lyrics are in Spanish. This seems mostly for those who are already down with BOOM BOOM KID's diverse oeuvre. (JM)
(Ugly)

BOXKITE – "Struggles" EP

A good effort by these young Brits, playing what they call "sad hardcore," a rather unfortunate title that we will (hopefully) forget as the band matures. Based on the strength of this record, I trust we will see better judgement in the future. Most tracks border on the atmospheric as an affront to a straightforward tune, devolving into a stream of ethereal and discordant hardcore. I found the most compelling tracks to be those with the unbridled speed and aggression BOXKITE tends to shy away from. The signature stroke of the band is dissonant melodies, which they rely heavily on and don't always deliver to satisfaction. The heavy hand of CEREMONY and poetic melody of MODERN LIFE IS WAR are apparent in the music yet BOXKITE's stronger suit is the approach we only get glimpses of on tracks like "Struggles" or the punchy "Fort Worth." Those have teeth but the rest are a bit flat. (RM)
(Boslevan / Tangled Talk)

BROKEN PRAYER – "Misanthropocentric AKA Droid's Blood" LP

Nasty, brutish hardcore here, fitting the general theme of BROKEN PRAYER's output so far. Yes, there are catchy parts with synthy shit going on, and no, I don't particularly like them, but I'm okay with not liking everything about a record. Sometimes the synths work favorably in the noise scheme of things, as on "Bloodsuckers," a song as misanthropic and esoteric as the best of 'em: "This world is a piece of shit / Can't wait to leave it." When it gets harsh and blown-out, as it does often enough to keep me paying close attention, it gets *really* good. BROKEN PRAYER's lyrics, though, soar above my petty aversion to certain musical decisions, and the plodding closer to Side A is a fine example: "Where would you be without friends? You're nothing / The glue demands allegiance to the clan – an agreement / There's a strength in power – power, young man, in agreement / … Your friends, who you will always defend." I've listened to that song at least five times in a row now, if that's a sign of endorsement. (SZ)
(Sorry State)

BURNCHURCH –LP

Melancholy eco-centric anarcho-crust punk from Ireland with the lucid passion of MENTAL DISEASE and the staunch conviction of REACT. Dual vocals spit back and forth, with viciousness and grumbling locomotion comparable to SCUMBRIGADE. The pace throughout the record is just the right amount of attacking hardcore and rhythmic epic dooming crust. Many bright riffs resonate at surprising moments, creating alarming urgency above the overall sullen tone. The engineering on this is outrageous, with cascading drum rolls, snare licks, and the tightest trajectory of guitars and bass protesting in unison. I can't really get over how intensely determined and well-paced this is, like the beating of an elderly heart. Why anxiously force music whose message is always taken for granted? This crust hits heavy like waves, not like wars. Gorgeous lyrics about nature and animals contain poetic metaphors in both Irish and Polish, while beautiful artwork reminiscent of NAUSEA's *Extinction* adorns and thorns the cover, depicting a child laid to rest in the briars, spores and bones of rubble of what was once a civilization. New growth is emerging. Within the darkness of this hardcore record you get that sense of understanding and hope. I think it will grow on you just as fast. (JR)
(Contraszt / Dogs And Vultures / Trujaca Fala / Up The Punx)

CHAINSAW – "See-Saw" EP

The slack-jawed cover of "What Goes On" by the VELVET UNDERGROUND: a hallmark of early European punk. Here's CHAINSAW shitting another turd in the bowl. The rest of this piece of shit is much more memorable. The songs aren't sick with hooks like a lot of the junk that gets painted the same color as this piece of trash, but are nonetheless rather good. Sounds quite like the TEEN IDLES on the B-side! "Kill in the Blanks" is the standout track on this fucking thing. (BB)
(No Good)

CHEAP DRUGS – "Angst" LP

Belgians taking a stab at burly USHC is nothing new in the modern age. This CHEAP DRUGS LP is no slouch. Pretty by-the-books thrash intertwined with mosh parts and you have a result that falls right in line with what most of the slam-dancing youth are after. (JU)
(Hardware)

CHILDREN UNBORN FOR THE PROTECTION OF SOCIETY – "Abortion Tree" EP

I don't know. Maybe this sounds something like WARCRY? They thank OI POLLOI. That means something in this day and age. That's a staunch, obstinate stand against the future of punk. That's a line the sand—you take the future, C.U.P.S. will take the '90s. This is retro-rock. Punk. Anarchy signs. Something something abortion. I don't know. I'm not equipped for this. C.U.P.S. C.U.P.S. C.U.P.S. CUPS. CUPS. CUPS? (BB)
(Obnoxious Drunk Punk / Toptone)

CHRISTI – "Cry/Get You Off My Mind"

Two song offerings from Richmond (VA) band CHRISTI on this short and sweet little single. A-side features "Cry" with tough PRIESTS vocals and doo-wop melodies. It's all sweet power pop that borders on saccharine. "Get You Off My Mind" has some serious surf à la LA LUZ for sure, and tinges of YOUNGER LOVERS' off-kilter pop. Just put Side B on repeat. If you dig any of the above bands you'll probably dig this EP. (CR)
(Feel It)

CLASSMATES – CD

This Italian band is going for a garage power pop sound. This is ok. It doesn't get much better than ok, although it is by no means bad. The vocals remind me of DILLINGER FOUR with that raspy tone. I'll take local band COCKTAILS over these guys any day. But for locals in Italy I'm sure these guys host a good party in a bar. In a Burger Records world these guys will hold up alright. (RL)
(Area Pirata)

COLDSKIN – "Make Hell Home" EP

Thankfully, the coldness is there, making their name valid. At first I guessed they're from Portland, judging by their gruff, doomy-melodic approach, but turns out they are from nearly the opposite side of the continent. Tampa's COLDSKIN would surely appeal to fans of PDX heroes such as the OBSERVERS or the ESTRANGED. Take melodic hooks and the dark feel of those bands and put gruff vocals on top, drench the guitars in reverb, and you're pretty close to COLD SKIN. It's got a few wanky solos, but I'm into those. Everything's mostly by-the-numbers here, but that's not always a bad thing, right? (MA)
(Financial Ruin)

CUNTZ – "Cooked/Cheen"

I would assume if you were going to name your band something ostensibly offensive, your music would be as well. However CUNTZ play jangly garage rock moderne. The singer sounds kind of angry, but not in a frightening way. I'd say it's kind of cute. These are two short songs that sound nice. I like it. (CK)
(Total Punk)

CYANIDE PILLS – "Government" EP

I've never listened to these guys much. They've been around a good long while playing their dirty rock and roll. "Government" is the winner here with some fine political working class lyrics, sorta like BILLY BRAGG backed by the HEARTBREAKERS. I'd like it to be a little tougher and ruck inducing but what the fuck do I know? Give it a whirl. (RO)
(Damaged Goods)

DARK AGES – "Vapor" LP

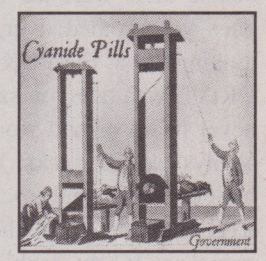
While playing this record I was trying to think of a single record Sorry State has done that I didn't like. Such a completely stellar track record. There's so much going on in this LP that it's really hard to put my finger on it. For starters, DARK AGES is why longevity, for me at least, is important in hardcore and punk. They've come a long way from their first record on Cowabunga. There are so many bands that stick around to do a killer 7" or maybe an LP, but never invest the time to fully develop a "sound." A lot of people expect to make an impact with minimal effort and while that may be the case sometimes, it's really interesting to see a band tough it out and even release a bad record. That's most certainly not the case here but it's a point I want to make. At times *Vapor* kinda straddles this angular, English post-punk vibe, à la WIRE (most apparent on "Vapor," "Into Gray" and the "A" parts on "The Dark One"), with a more Midwestern-cum-Carolinas take on hardcore. They've been described as sounding like DIE KREUZEN and I can see that for sure on the track "War" but they also have an OCTOBER FILE vibe on the longer tracks. I also would compare the sound to the *Give Thanks* LP by ARTICLES OF FAITH. I feel that when they catch their groove though, this record feels way more akin to the SUBCULTURE LP. They do it all with a technical proficiency that is baffling, as the feel or looseness of the record isn't affected. Sonically, this record is way less all over the place than I'm making it sound, it's just that, as I stated before, there's so much going on here. This record isn't a once over listen. This is something you have to mull over. It's great. I'm glad these folks are still making music. For fans of: ORNETTE COLEMAN's *The Shape of Jazz to Come*, the Criterion Collection, El Granada on a foggy day. (MW)
(Sorry State)

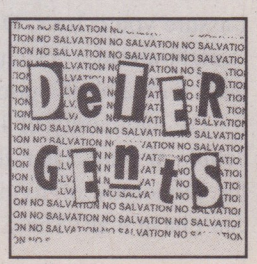
THE DECLINE – "Radio Revolution/Loser Machine"

These guys have been at it for 20 years. I have a lot of respect for bands that keep after it, even without widespread popularity. A lot of folks would hang up the guitar after a while. Lucky for us, these guys persevere. If you're a fan of melodic and catchy sing-along hardcore, you'll enjoy this one. Mid-tempo and catchy, you won't mistake this one for a sellout. It looks like it's limited to 550 copies and comes with a download card that promises these two tracks and much more. (KK)
(Hostage)

DETERGENTS — "No Salvation" EP

QCHC continues to promote the "NWOBHC" but this record rages beyond any wave or banner that may try to envelop it. "No Salvation" starts things off with an insistent 1-2-1-2 beat (for fans of the recent RIXE 7" and other recent Oi!-interpreters). "Dark Days" puts the twisted out of shape clean-and-yet-so-filthy guitar sound on this record on faster punk footing. So far this write-up has done little justice to the absolutely pissed and propulsive energy behind





DETERGENTS. I want DETERGENTS in my corner of the hellscape as we stare down the rise of far right politics across the world and see a generation sucked into the HDTV vortex. Vital punk for a putrid reality. (EW)
(Quality Control HC / Semtex Death)

DOGS ON ACID – "Make it Easy" EP

We've got a couple of catchy indie rock tunes here. I was going to say there was a punkish tilt to them but no, just some indie rock tunes. The A-side is the catchier, poppier one. It's a lazy, mid-tempo toe tapper the makes good use of simple guitar melodies that accentuate the vocals. The B-side is a little more aggressive with some off-kilter guitar stuff that is reminiscent of early '90s North Carolina bands like ARCHERS OF LOAF or SMALL. Is it punk? Not really. Is it a good listen? Sure. (PA)
(Ranch)

THE DRIVE – "Jerkin'" EP

Ahhh, the DRIVE. I remember those days long ago, in the '90s, combing mail-order lists of rare "KBD punk" records. Of course there were all the fanciest spendy ones you frothed over, and if you were looking at a Euro/UK focused list, the DRIVE was one you saw time and again, never heard of and wondered why it was always like 75 bucks. Well, it's like hard boogie rock or pub rock, if you like '70s STONES they have the slide guitar shit going on. If you dabble in '70s UK pub/punk/proto zones this is prolly right up your alley, but not really rough or punky enuff to make me wanna drop that import reissue cashola. (GB)
(Breakout)

DRY HEAVES – "Slim Pickings" LP

This is a tale of young punks railing against the system, man…of loud guitar solos and the pain of life. I know this sounds like a set up for a bad review, but I assure you it isn't. DRY HEAVES plays straight-ahead, catchy-but-still-hardcore punk with a bleak outlook. One song pines for the anonymity of living in the city. A couple of songs later, they complain about the monotony of living in the city! You can't have it all! The singer always sounds like he's on the edge of screaming full tilt, but never really gets to that point. There are some hints of early '80s Southern California punk, like BAD RELIGION and D.I., but never really getting into rehash territory. Good shit. (GH)
(Adult Crash / Viral Age)

EASY LOVERS – "Get A Job" LP

This is some pretty basic, unpolished, fun, rock'n'roll punk that probably has a "pub only" policy. These Norman, OK dudes seem pretty sweet and goofy, and they probably don't realize that their song about killing a girlfriend is pretty fucked up, because, "Hey, we're goofy rock'n'roll punks," like an Oklahoma mix of SLOPPY SECONDS, and someone that *really* loves Joe Strummer. I can see myself getting really plastered and playing about four of these goofball jams at a DJ set, but I sure as heck ain't gonna blast the entire LP for the neighbors. (DZ)
(self-released)

ENDLESS COLUMN – "Summer" EP

What happens when you get members of RED DONS, DAYLIGHT ROBBERY, ex-OBSERVERS, and ex-TYRADES? Some pretty glorious mind melting melodic punk. First off, the melodic guitar in "Tit for Tat" is golden. And songs "Misrata" and "Decay" are drenched in surf, but their overall sound is shellacked with the dirt and grit of garage and '60s Brit Pop sensibilities. All four songs were taken from their 2011 demo and been remastered for this 7" but have kept the charm of its original lo-fi recording. Serious ear candy. (CR)
(Taken By Surprise)

EXPIRED LOGIC – "Ghidrah" EP

Seattle's EXPIRED LOGIC pound out four songs of metal-tinged straightforward mid-tempo hardcore with a 1987-ish feel. The tempered production—everything is clear and audible—gives it this aura, similar to say, the MOB's *We Come To Crush* LP or some of the East Coast records of the late '80s when the focus turned to "getting a good recording," where a sturdy but measured sound trades in the patches and glue provided by five sounding distortion. Tough vocals stick solidly in the forefront over a clear range of instrumental pounding, but where this "Sci-Fi Punk" band leaps off into its own territory is the addition of a Theremin, which pushes soundtrack spookiness, setting the balance of the songs slightly off in a good way. Bleak lyrics about futuristic warfare, the powerful that run our society, paranoia and disdain and an instrumental about Ghidrah, the three-headed monster from the *Godzilla* films! Cover is a cool *Terminator*-ish cyborg ready to attack! (KS)
(self-released)

FA BONX – "49 Stick" EP

Wow, what the fuck is going on here? Now first off, this group, called FA BONX, definitely missed the memo about ROXY MUSIC, which is that, you as a punk are obligated to acknowledge your gender ambiguous roots and appreciate your ROXY MUSIC forefathers, but by no means should you ever attempt to emulate the music or sonic qualities of said ROXY MUSIC. So these FA BONX guys made two mistakes: they have a loud noodley saxophone, and also some weird broken effect-laden keyboard that has not been manufactured since 1974. But don't let that turn you off. This is basically what you imagine a band like the TUBES would sound like, but then it actually doesn't suck IRL like the TUBES always does. It's like, y'know, rock'n'roll music from the '70s, only paradoxically it's from now. (GB)
(What's Your Rupture?)

FASHIONISM – "Smash the State" EP

Jeezus, is this catchy. I mean, like your head just starts bouncing as soon as the needle hits the record. Smash the state with your face? That seems like a good idea. It's sort of poppy punk, sort of new wavey, sort of stilted, sort of herky-jerky, sort of mod, sort of sweet. All three cuts really are killer. This is high praise, but this has got the energy and the catchiness of bands like the BRIEFS or the EXPLODING HEARTS. Beyond the record, the pic sleeve is a thing of beauty. (KK)
(Hosehead)

FASHION WEEK – "Prêt-à-Porter" LP

Is this post-post-hardcore? Neo-grunge? A long-buried time capsule of radio-

friendly screamo? Too heavy to be alt rock but certainly not metal in any meaningful sense of the word, FASHION WEEK hovers in a slightly stoney, slightly pizzadelic realm that might appeal to nostalgic hardcore kids who miss '90s touchstones such as SILVERCHAIR, SMASHING PUMPKINS, and PORNO FOR PYROS. The hoarse, throat-ripping vocals that dominate much of the record lend a nice touch of emotive gnar, but I'll leave it to the reader to decide if those soaring power ballads are campy and fun or just awkward and horribly misguided. In the end there're just *way* too many ingredients in the pie here for me, with cringe-y moments heavily outnumbering killer riffs. The uniting factor apparently lies in the fact that all of these guys have done time in JARBOE's backing band, which, based on listening to this, I would not have guessed in a thousand years. (WB)
(Solar Flare)

FROGRAMMERS – "Boring" LP

Totally snotty yet totally basic '77-inspired punk outta Berlin. While it's clear that the band is taking cues from genre classics, they sound so restrained on this recording that any attitude, energy or urgency is completely zapped outta the finish product. Disappointing. (MC)
(Wanda)

FUN PEOPLE – "Desarme" EP

This has a pretty cool late '90s vibe to it, and with good reason...it came out in 1996. This really reminds me of the poppy, politically charged hardcore drenched punk bands from Richmond that would come to my sleepy Florida town back then, and it's pretty fucking good. Six songs, three of which are covers. Really great covers, actually! If you were seeing pop punk *and* hardcore bands play in the mid '90s, and liked life for a second, you should go get this right now. For fans of INQUISITION, AVAIL, DISCOUNT, BLACK SABBATH, and NE'ER DO WELLS. Yes, I know that sounds like a weird mix, but you'll just have to trust me. I want to hear much, much more! (DZ)
(self-released)

GAY KISS — "Preservation Measures" LP

Filling out a hardcore full-length— at 33 rpm, no less—is one of the harder tasks in the challenging world of music, but after a 12" EP and a couple of 7"s GAY KISS have measured themselves up to the task. It helps if you're a band that knows how to use the extra space, and GAY KISS are experts at twisting negative space in and out of time and tempo. The first track starts strong, rides out what sounds like a fade out of distant kick drum thump, then snaps back into a bedroom mosh-worthy breakdown. "Preservation Measures" is full of whiplash-inducing unpredictability and feverish guitar work, totally restless playing all over the frequency spectrum. Sometimes it sounds like the guitarist threw his instrument away in favor of a power drill or a dial-up modem hooked up to a Rat pedal. The strongest tracks here stretch out and use the empty space to let a riff unravel and implode before taking it somewhere else. "Relent," for instance, lets a SACCHARINE TRUST-style riff collapse, cave in on itself and get back on its feet over and over again over a shifting set of fills. Fans of freaky hardcore bands in the game such as NASA SPACE UNIVERSE, the LOWEST FORM, and WHITE WARDS will find a lot to like here. Complete with some great cover artwork, another tremendously sick package from Sorry State. (EW)
(Sorry State Records)

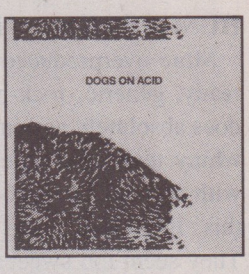
GRIDE / SIDETRACKED – split 10"

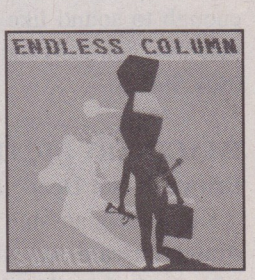
This one gets a big "fuck yes" from me. Tacoma, Washington's SIDETRACKED crushes it with fifteen super short blasts of West Coast powerviolence. No bells and whistles, just rage. Like a stripped-down CAPITALIST CASUALTIES, if you can imagine that.

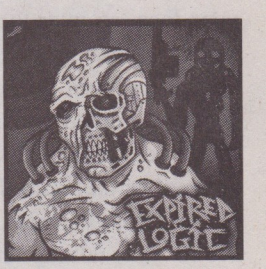
The Czech Republic's GRIDE delivers some top notch progressive grind madness. Kind of sounds like being lost at sea in a violent hurricane. These dudes really keep it interesting with what almost sounds like a KING CRIMSON influence. Featuring an "unplugged" bonus track that is weird and awesome. If any of that sounds lame to you, get it anyway 'cause it's hella sick! (BA)
(Insane Society)

HAFNER – "Boyos" LP

Slow to mid-paced, often brooding, noise rawk from San Francisco, in the realm of UNSANE, JESUS LIZARD, SHELLAC, and COWS. Sure, it's familiar territory but *don't* let that stop you for one second! HAFNER puts the right notes in the right places and the vocals are just spot-on for this kind of racket. The vocals of Christopher "Burd" have a lot of character and the drumming and riffs are solid throughout. The only issue I have is that the handwritten details on the LP look worse than even my chicken scratch. I'd love to see a band like this play in San Jose instead of the Pleistocene-era punks and doofy rockabilly acts that still plague that live scene. (JD)
(self-released)







HUNGRY TIGER – LP

More overproduced, movie soundtrack-ready, generic, rock-hook pop punk that does absolutely nothing for me. If you like whiny, tear-laden lyrics and pop punk/rock with no punch whatsoever, you might like this. Is there a name for this genre yet? They seem too sweet to be PBR swilling, bearded and shirtless, yet not polished enough to sound like they want to go on that shoe company tour. (DZ)
(Sex Sheet)

IMAGINARY DICTIONARY – "James Brown Is Not Dead" EP

Killer Belgian shit that takes basically straightforward songs and presents them with such fire that it feels like you're hearing hardcore for the first time. So in your face, so over the top sonically, even simple plodding tracks like the opener "Introvers" turn into devastating bangers. I guess a good recording does make a difference, because I keep coming back to how killer this record sounds—it doesn't distract from the tracks, it builds on them. We're not talking some bullshit over-the-top super production, IMAGINARY DICTIONARY just nail this shit on all points. Fierce, ferocious, raw, powerful hardcore. (WN)
(Hardware)

IN DISGUST / SFN – split EP

SFN feedback into attack mode with IRON LUNG precision and mammoth stampeding powerviolence. Dare I say this side is catchy? Engaging, disengaging, raging. This is what it sounds like when you try to punch your way out of a very small box. IN DISGUST deliver sporadic grindcore from San Jose to melt your mind. This is what is sounds like to ride the blackened clouds of the coast on a beastly steed. Where SFN brutally bulldozes a path, IN DISGUST hoof-tramples your face into the mud. That's a lot to take in under five minutes. (JR)
(Drugged Conscience)

THE INSTIGATORS – "The Blood Is On Your Hands" LP

Part II of the "INSTIGATORS 30th Anniversary" releases, this LP collects material that predates the *Nobody Listens Anymore* LP reviewed last month. While undeniably part of the UK anarcho scene, I was never particularly sold on this band; their album generally leans too close to melodic rock and roll for me. That said, their track "Free (You're Not)" on Pushead's *Cleanse The Bacteria* compilation has always been a personal favorite, sublimely erring on the right side of the punk and rock collusion. Thankfully the INSTIGATORS' EP, which makes up the bulk of Side A and gives this LP its name, shares this quality. A mix of SUBHUMANS and ICON AD (in some measure), it's the poppier and, begrudgingly, rockier side of the anarcho-punk spectrum, but it totally works for me. The compilation tracks from PAX's *Bollox to the Gonads* are a tad rougher, but still fit comfortably as the bridge between the demos and the EP. Side B is strictly demo material and it shows, though there are plenty of bright moments and never actually anything egregiously lackluster (like how I feel about *Nobody Listens Anymore*). I feel like this could've been reduced to an EP reissue, but the two compilation songs really are worth the trouble when it comes down to it. Regardless, *The Blood Is On Your Hands* should be picked up specifically for the EP songs—they're simply that good. Now I get it. (SZ)
(Ruin Nation / Skuld)

IRISH HANDCUFFS – "Hits Close To Home" CD

A very American sounding band from Germany, these guys have that '90s Dr. Strange meets Fat Records sound, along the lines of FACE TO FACE, RED CITY RADIO, and early ALKALINE TRIO. These guys are pretty good at it. I wouldn't say this is essential but they are certainly off to a good start. Decent playing and production with good melodic songs. Knowing this sound has been beaten to death by now isn't a plus for me. But I'm down with mixtapes and newer bands too so if you are a pop punker you could do worse. (RL)
(Shield Recordings)

JAWBOX – "My Scrapbook of Fatal Accidents" 2xLP

JAWBOX may have typified the post Revolution Summer Dischord sound more than any band outside of FUGAZI. You can argue all you want about major label stuff but there was a time when a whole bunch of punks still swore by that first 7" and with good reason. Hell, the first song they released was on a record put out by us here at *Maximum*. Their early stuff had melody but also had a lot of push and aggression and despite their sound becoming less straight punk as time went on (especially with the change in drummers) it could never really be called radio friendly. This double LP is a reissue of a CD that was released shortly after the band broke up. It includes a wide range of stuff and I could never quite figure out how they chose the tracks they did. There are five songs from a Peel Session in 1994, a couple of unreleased later tracks, a few songs from compilations, some live tracks from 1996 and a bunch of cover songs that we could all probably do without (I'm not sure why they left off a couple of their compilation and split 7" tracks). This isn't a record that I would call essential. In fact, if you're just starting out, you should start somewhere else. But, for fans, it's cool to see this stuff come to light again. The record comes with two booklets. One has a list of every show they played and every record they released, the other is all pictures. (PA)
(Arctic Rodeo / DeSoto)

THE JONES – "Gravity Blues" CD

An expanded reissue for a release from 2000. This band features guitar god Dickie Hammond, who you may know from LEATHERFACE and HDQ, as well as Golly, the singer from HDQ. I loved this disc when it came out. What makes this even better is the addition of a single and an EP that preceded the LP, six songs that are new to me. If you like that later generation UK punk of HDQ, LEATHERFACE, and MEGA CITY 4 then this is a no brainer. Good release and great riffing. (RL)
(Boss Tuneage)

LAST SONS OF KRYPTON – "Teenage Trash" LP

This band has managed to ride a glowing Tim Yo record review from nearly 20 years ago into the realm of near-legend. Maybe they're right? Surprisingly, that debut 7" is one I still count amongst my faves of the era,

worthy of being mentioned alongside REATARDS, LOLI AND THE CHONES and EPILEPTIX when it comes to primitive, shitty-teenager punk rock. And Wisconsin's LAST SONS OF KRYPTON may be the shittiest teenagers of them all—at least that's the case this long-overdue LP is making. Every one of the twenty tunes collected here represents a life's work for some true teenage fuck-ups, and the quality of the racket is generally higher than it has any real right to be. Their sensitivities and "worldview" couldn't be any lower though, offering up some kind of perverse balance that keeps them punk boneheads until death. Whatever. A gang of insufferable, bratty and delinquent assholes making a racket outta sheer frustration and hatred of their lives and surroundings is always gonna be punker than shit, and LAST SONS OF KRYPTON fit that bill perfectly. True teenage assholery on display…waste no time in acquiring a copy of your own! (MC)
(Certified PR)

LIME CRUSH – "Graveyard" EP

Wild, destruction anarchic girl sound that encapsulates the freedom and fuck you of human existence and punk in the most kicks affirmative fashion! Makes me wanna run raucous in the streets. In the realm of KLEENEX and BÄRCHEN UND DIE MILCHBUBIS, this is danceable rambunctiousness, fierce Dada-punk for frantic insurrectionists. The vocals! The guitar sound! Basslines aimed clearly at making sure the pogo-ists and the prime movers are kept frantic and foolish on the dance floor. Each song has a total line-up change! But somehow the record retains a cohesive action, time, and vision ensuring its place in my top ten 45s of 2015! Get it or regret it, Austrian punk rampage! (LG)
(Fettkakao)

LINE TRAPS – LP

I put this on 45 at first and was like…Fuck, man… this shit kicks booty. Well, it's damn good on the right speed as well. They've got some fine punker names—my favorite is General Debris. The whole package is an optical treat with a silkscreened cover, poster, and that white thingy with the hole too. The drums are troglodyte style. Pounding and tough. Not for wimps. They squeeze a buttload of short sharp shocks on one side of a record. I keep trying to play the other side but can't get it to work. Sounds really experimental. They do an ANGRY SAMOANS cover that would get Metal Mike off the SPICE GIRLS. Fans of that band and the SPLASH FOUR will greedily lap up this trashed out slop. (RO)
(Screen Test Records)

LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN DAREDEVILS – "5 Song EP" CD

Goodtime inbred rock'n'roll from Chattanooga, TN. The vocals are a little too flat and overpowering in the shack they recorded in, "Throwin 'Em Back" steals a chorus from the immortal Kris Kristofferson, "No Good" is straight up "Mongoloid" and they finish with a nice JAMES GANG cover so it's clear that these folk could use a few more original ideas. Especially on a five songer. It's a good time, though, and fans of COCKNOOSE and the ilk will boogie down with a cousin and their dog. A delightful hillbilly ménage à trois that will keep these ears open for future releases. (RO)
(self-released)

LOVE LANES – "Je Me Rappelle A Vous" EP

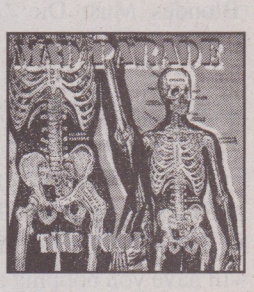
This is an interesting one. Based in Berlin, with French, British, and German members, LOVE LANES have a similarly disparate range of sounds. The overwhelming comparison that comes through is to a kind of lost late '80s Dischord band. The snaking guitar lines are there but with a layer of keyboards that throws an almost GIRLS AGAINST BOYS twist. The first song on the flipside actually usurps the DC influence by sounding a lot like an EMPIRE song even. I'm not sure what to make of this record, as there are moments of brilliance but there's so much going on over these four songs that it's hard to pin down what they're going for. Maybe *that's* what they're going for? I like it, and would like to hear more, for what that's worth… (AM)
(Rocka Rolla)

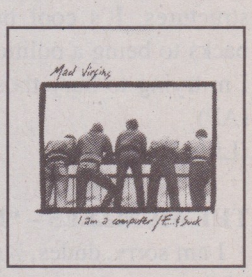
MAD PARADE – "The Fool" EP

MAD PARADE in 2014 is not as terrible as you might imagine. Or, if you're really old, MAD PARADE is truly one of the greats still keeping it real from the legendary OG SoCal beach punk scene. It is some of the most overblown anthemic punk I can remember hearing in a long while. And when the rest of the band is singing along, you almost forget how old and barely alive the singer sounds. So go down to your local punk "haunt," guzzle a beer, grab your best buds and throw your goddamn fists in the air because it's fuckin' party time, OC punx style!! Also, kudos to these guys for surviving. (GB)
(Hostage)

MAD VIRGINS – "I Am a Computer/F… And Suck"

Continuing my "Mad" month, I hath been blessed with this straight reissue of Belgium 1978 dumb KBD greats MAD VIRGINS. If you like bad, plodding, repetitive music this might just be for you.





They really push the definition of "guitar solo" in this track, "Fuck and Suck," oops, I meant "F... and Suck." The A-side "I Am A Computer" is also plodding and repetitive and the crash "cymbal" sounds like a small child's "splash" cymbal that you would prefer to never hear again in that context, but here it is given new life and new meaning. Their bad English certainly deserves a mention as well, although to their credit, I can and do understand the words that they are singing, they are just pronounced very poorly. (GB)
(No Good)

MISSING MONUMENTS – "Too Many People..." EP

Although there's always grime lurking somewhere, MISSING MONUMNETS represents the polished side to KING LOUIE's seemingly effortless hit-making. Assuming this EP is your first exposure to Missing Monuments, it's big guitar power pop that isn't afraid to kick a lil' bit o' shit around (see "War Is In My Eyes" for evidence). Three tunes, no duds, all party. Anyone interested already owns a copy! (MC)
(Blondes Must Die / Ghost Highway / KOTJ)

MODERN LOVE – "Small Stone" EP

Norwegian melodic punk with political lyrics, like HEROIN meets MASSHYSTERI and an organless (INTERNATIONAL) NOISE CONSPIRACY. Catchy tunes that will have you bopping along stop start with lyrics about destroying fucked up power structures. It's cool but gives me flashbacks to being a politically earnest teen—I'm trying to bury those memories really. (AP)
(Lilla Himmel)

THE MUMZEES – "Heavy Desert" CD

I am sorry, dudes, but this has to be one of the worst band names ever. I naturally assume they are four mama's boys from Georgia. They play a version of BLACK LIPS or THE KING KHAN & BBQ SHOW lo-fi moderne garage rock. It is fuzzy and the singer sounds like he is constantly out of breath. Eh. (CK)
(Broken Hip)

NATURE BOYS – "Pissy Wind/Coast to Coast"

I've said it before and I'll say it again... NATURE BOYS are a band that people are not paying enough attention to now, but will miss when they're gone. They combine equal parts of punk, hardcore, living on the fringes, hard living, DEAD MOON and their own inimitable style to make something that is their own. "Pissy Wind" is perfect. It's a fast fucking song about the toxicity of surrounding yourself with people who are consumed by bad fucking vibes...or that's what I took from it, at least. Two genders on the mic at all times. "Coast to Coast" on the flip side slows down (barely), a mid-tempo ode to dead friends (maybe???). It's there to help you relive the pain of life or the inevitable return of something we've all felt, but have rarely given name to...sometimes known colloquially as "The Great Terribleness." The bumbling of our stupid selves as we rocket through space on a dumb piece of rock. After releasing two LPs and one EP, NATURE BOYS have added new drummer Alex Moss on this record, which has tightened their whole mess up considerably. The whole band sounds more focused...concise even...and these two songs just aren't enough for me, but I'll wait patiently for the next few songs to trickle out of their dilapidated Kansas City homes. (GH)
(Replay)

NERVE BEATS – "Art History" EP

My very first thought here was that this sounds like the early CRINGER records and then I read the letter from the band and it just so happens that they're from Hawaii. Weird. This self-released 7" has four songs of MINUTEMEN inspired jazzy punk. It can sound a little off or a bit jerky at times but that's the point and what makes the songs interesting. Track it down. (PA)
(self-released)

NEU-RONZ – "You're Calling Me" EP

This Stockholm quartet rages through six songs in about as many minutes. When I first put the headphones on, I may have been swayed by the quasi-new wave/KBD logo and artwork into thinking I was hearing a blown out take on the SPITS, but then I began to hear the touch of Agnew, bits of *Group Sex*, even hints at "Suicide City" circa 2003. Musically this owes way more to '80s Southern California than it does to '80s Skövde, Göteborg, Linköping, or Malmö. The delivery is tight and the riffs are solid with either a Boss SYB-5 or some other generator occasionally floating in sounds from outer space. The songs move along at a near-heart attack pace but there are a few breakdowns to keep things interesting. This is especially effective during the chorus of "Yesterdays News." (JK)
(Adult Crash)

NO///SE – "Lower Berth" LP

This band is from the city I live in, but somehow has remained unknown to me. It's weird when that happens. Especially when I hear the band and they sound pretty good. There's a very driving and propulsive feel to the songs on this LP, with a touch of melody. The grit in the vocals and guitars gives it an edge similar to stuff like LEATHERFACE, but perhaps with more darkness. The opening track is something completely different—it's faster, but with less grit and more space. I keep wanting the album to return to that feel for variety's sake, and though it never does, there're still enough subtle elements changing throughout to keep things fresh. No single song grabs me by the neck, but I have the feeling that repeated listens will make all those hooks pop out and burrow into my brain. Great songwriting, great sound. Oh yeah, and I live in Oakland. (MA)
(1859 / Man In Decline)

OUTCASTS – "Frustration (Best of 1977-1985)" LP

I feel like there have been a fair few OUTCASTS reissues and collections in recent years. Well deserved, and if you're just dipping your toes in, this is as good a place to start as any. It compiles their transition from snot-nosed, somewhat inept punk upstarts, to the Good Vibrations years, when they challenged the UNDERTONES for the Northern Ireland power pop crown, through to the New Wave influence of their early '80s material, and even their brief flirtation with psychobilly (which I thankfully hadn't heard before). The extensive liner notes tell the story of the band, with a few humorous anecdotes

for good measure. "Self Conscious Over You" is one of the best songs ever written, so if you buy this record just for that song you are on to a winner, but if you don't already have an extensive OUTCASTS collection, this is worth picking up. (AM)
(Wanda)

PAGERIPPER – "Bruce Jams: Vol. III" 12"

A distressed and amazingly catchy record from start to finish that combines thick, dirty production with powerful, chest-clutching melodies. PAGERIPPER completely surprised me with their vulnerability and adherence to purity on this record with ebullience that just seeps out of every sharp note and blown out howl. Channeling the grit of Jimmy SHOTWELL and melody of HOT WATER MUSIC, this small collection of songs stands to make an indelible mark with those who keep the HORRIBLE ODDS and PINHEAD GUNPOWDER on their turntables. *Vol. III* is a beast of charged melancholy that wills you to croon and flail with every pained chorus, forgetting your problems while indulging in your grief. Strong stuff that has been on heavy rotation at the house, in a super small pressing so grab it if you see it! (RM)
(1859 / Different Kitchens)

PLASTIC PINKS – "Fun/Kelly"

Okay, I've just got to get this out of the way: I think it's weird when punk records give songwriting credits and song composition credits. It seems kind of pretentious. Now, let's get started. The A-side really sounds like it could be from DAVILA 666. Not just because it's sung in Spanish, but because it's both extremely catchy and sort of "heavy." Is it coincidence that they thank AJ Davila in the credits? I honestly don't know, but I just can't believe that it is coincidental. The B-side continues along the same lines, only this time in English. Very garage-y, very catchy, very methodical, and still very "heavy." I find myself playing the record over and over. Given my generally short attention span, I'm thinking that is a good sign. Great sound, great record. (KK)
(Die Slaughterhaus)

PLASTIX – "Ich Bin Modern!" LP

I loved the 45 that came out last year, so was psyched to hear these uncovered rehearsal recordings from this Austrian punk force, who existed between 1980-81 and only played two shows! They rehearsed more than they performed, and here is the evidence. After my initial excitement I was a little reticent, like why does every vague idea of a past punk generation put to Memorex have to be commemorated forever on wax nowadays?! Some of these songs are pretty throwaway, but then the more you listen the more weird details appear and enlighten, and ultimately I think this is a pretty cool/wild LP, a scrapbook of past adventures... Brat girl vocals over falling apart punk of various impulses, art punk, cow punk, dumb punk, ska punk, fifty nine ideas per second! Scratched out guitars and weird B-movie theme incantations. You get the feeling of being a bored teenager and just doing something so you can hang out with your friends rather than achieve concrete goals, aimless kicks! Charming insurrection. Some of the songs would have been sick if fleshed out on a 7" perhaps but listening to these skeletal visions is really cool. PLASTIX have so much *personality*. It's fun and funny without being a joke. A trick and a treat. Grab it! (LG)
(Danger / Rosa Vertov)

PLATINUM BOYS – "Future Hits" LP

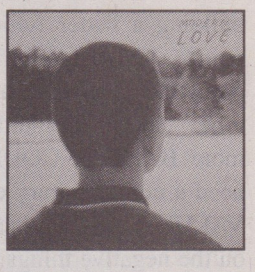
Almost every song on this LP sounds like it is incorporating the riff from JUDAS PRIEST's "Living After Midnight." Each song may start out differently, but then it settles into that groove. The music is a cross between '80s hair metal ballads and shoegaze. There are some catchy bits, but overall it is rather repetitive. It makes sense that they would write "Punk sucks" on the insert. (CK)
(Dusty Medical)

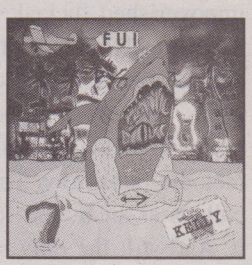
PULLING PUNCHES – "Lighten Up, Burn It Down" CD

The second release from this Philadelphia post-hardcore band. The screaming vocals don't really fit with the melodic hardcore music to me—one moment I'm thinking SINKING SHIPS and then the music goes all A WILHELM SCREAM. Considering the vocal style the music could have more thrash moments. I know there is a scene for this stuff, especially on the East Coast. I just don't see these guys making much of an impact for the time being. This just makes me want to listen to some STRIKE ANYWHERE. (RL)
(self-released)

RANDOM VIOLENCE / VALUE LASTS – split EP

Youth crew damage straight from the Philippines. The first thing I thought when I slapped on the A-side was, "Are these drums triggered or just meant to sound like they are?" Seriously, snare sound like a penny hitting a window. RANDOM VIOLENCE exudes a more FIRST STEP feel, almost like some Youngblood type shit circa '04 but with a heavier use of the octave chord riff (what RIKK AGNEW made famous in the ADOLESCENTS). The standout track content-wise is most definitely "Reason." If you can't yell about scene unity and





building a better future, then what's the point? VALUE LASTS comes straight outta the gate with a total amazingcore vibe. Less straightforward hardcore, more BANE or CODE ORANGE (if ya need a contemporary example). Lyrically, VALUE LASTS places more emphasis on the negative things we do to ourselves. "Perverted" asks why we "consume and die with no purpose," and I don't know if I have an answer. But it's a good question! This whole record is dedicated to Denver Rubis, a member of both bands. I'm sure he'd be stoked on such an awesome offering of both his bands on one record. R.I.P., man. For fans of: Stumptown coffee, veganaise, shorts all year round. (MW)
(Aklasan / Delusion of Terror / Get Up & Go / Left Hand Path / Love From Hate / Still Ill)

THE REAL MCKENZIES – "Rats In The Burlap" CD

Apparently Paul McKenzie has been spinning his yarns of a Scotland that never quite was for 20 years now. Not so bad. Indeed, on this, their ninth full-length effort, the current iteration of the band has never sounded better—melodic punk rock with bagpipes. Having actually grown up in not-so-bonnie Scotland—crap weather, great folks—I always detested bagpipes. And can't say I dig nationalism, false or otherwise. But these chaps manage to use the bagpipes as another melodic instrument in the arsenal (much the way a good set of keyboards actually really enhanced the DAMNED), and as a perennially impoverished fucked "nation," keep their paens to all things Scottish largely directed against the British Royals, which is, in itself, entirely a good thing. And they really do rock, in that anthemic, sing-along melodic punk way. There's blessedly few ballads as such, and 'tis all the better for it. And still the only sonically acceptable form of bagpipery I've encountered to date. (RK)
(Fat Wreck)

ROOM 101 – "Vox Humana" EP

ROOM 101 is a one man band, but not like one of those dudes who plays a banjo with a bass drum strapped to his back. It's more like a dude with a pre-recorded full band and a lot of screaming over it. I'm rarely a fan of drum machines, but ROOM 101 makes it work. The three songs on here are full-on punk and post-punk stuff and Roburt Reynolds (the one-man) has a voice that dances somewhere in the vein of Jello and Frank Discussion (FEEDERZ) but never claims allegiance to either. The best song is "Exterminate Adult Thinking," which has the most character of any of the songs and pines for a "full throttle youth revolt". Hopefully, Roburt has enough panache to pull this off live, full sound because the record sounds pretty stellar. (GH)
(Beau Travail / X-Mist)

SACRED PAWS – "Six Songs" 12"

Holy shit, this record is so incredible! It's so energizing and uplifting, total power with an untouchable dreamy/introspective feeling that leaves me reeling. This is post-punk insurrection, like what I imagined SLITS sounded like when I found out that NENEH CHERRY was in a later incarnation of the group...Freedom! An eye opening offering from the endlessly inspirational Rachel Aggs (TRASH KIT, SHOPPING, COVER GIRL) who started this band long distance-style with Eilidh Rodgers, whom she had played with in Slumberland Records dreamers GOLDEN GRRRLS (Rachel lives in London, Eilidh lives in Glasgow). This record highlights both of their musical impulses in a beautiful manner; Rachel's amazing finger picking guitar style that simultaneously evokes West African Highlife style and post-punk explorations meshing perfectly with Eilidh's dream-like Flying Nun meets YOUNG MARBLE GIANTS songcraft. The closest band reference I can think of is perhaps the RAINCOATS, just for the way the women's voices intertwine and the inherent playfulness / darkness, it's somehow both jaded and elated!? But while this evokes old sounds, it's in no way a Xerox of an idea that happened thirty years ago, it feels fresh and eternal! The way they put across this snapshot of human existence in sound...Rip it up and start again. This makes me nostalgic for something that was never mine. (LG)
(Rock Action)

SECRET TOMBS – LP

This takes a while to get going and when it does it ends up being a mixed of PAVEMENT (guitar tone & structure) and fuggin' AEROSMITH (vocals) along with a bunch of NEIL YOUNG and JAYHAWKS-like acoustic "Uncle Rock." Then they somehow manage to go accidently punk but even that falls into my hate pit by reminding me of JANE'S ADDICTION meets PERE UBU (the latter on a really off night) and U.S. MAPLE (if their singer dude didn't always sound like he was gonna sneeze). During every track I thought, fuckin' hell—make up your mind on a goddamn song structure! If this were a car it would be a big-ass lemon. (JD)
(Braddock Hit Factory)

SEVERED LIMB – "If You Ain't Living'/Tidy Is A Vulture"

Two pretty wildly different styles here by this London "punk skiffle" band. On one side is a loose, garage-y, BILLY CHILDISH style groove. On the flip-flop is some pretty catchy ska, à la pretty early MADNESS or the rawer side of the SPECIALS. If I read this review, I wouldn't want to buy this record either, but it's got a pretty great groove. Smooth, acoustic-ish garage and ska? Yes, please. (DZ)
(Damaged Goods)

SEX SNOBS – "Lonely" LP

SEX SNOBS play deranged speedy noise rock. The slower, more feedback and noise-driven songs on this record are reminiscent of the noisier Touch and Go stuff, but the more melodic guitar riff-driven tracks bring to mind elements of DEATH FROM ABOVE 1979, especially when the octave shifting effect is engaged. The bass, which is a perfect low down rumble while not being too distorted and blown-out, is the best part on this record and constantly holds all of the songs together. There are a couple of sampled interludes and final "Prologue" track that feel out of place. "Prologue" ends with a bit of noise, but has a melancholic yet hopeful sounding piano riff, while the others interludes just seem to take away from the darker tone that the music is setting. (KC)
(Komarov / Velvet Glov)

SGURD – "The Beginning of the End" EP

Debut EP from this mixed German/Italian band that features one of the SMART COPS has plenty of your favorite boxes checked. Blown-out and raw(ish) youth crew thrash, with riffs and vocals that lean, at times to a more refined homage to *Victim in Pain*. This record could sit comfortably on Youth Attack next to bands like the REPOS and CIVILIZED. (JU)
(Adagio830)

SICK BOYS REVUE — "Sick Tales" CD

I don't know if it's the breakneck speed of all the weird freaky trash we review in these pages, but after listening to all 39 minutes of this CD I felt like I needed to take a nap or a cold shower. *Sick Tales* induced some serious lethargy. I feel like I've heard a lot of these chords and riffs before and none of these melodies really did much to stick around in my head. Altogether, this CD sounds a little too radio rock, and this would probably be the point I change the channel to KPOO or KBLX. (EW)
(Area Pirata)

SIEVEHEAD – "Desire" EP

Stripped down punk rock'n'roll filled with rich chorus-laden guitars that weave thick melodies through all four songs on this EP. Drowsy tinges to songs that feel so on edge—like the third song "Energy," which ends as soon as it starts, right as you begin to appreciate it. Sometimes vocals can be a little over the top in terms of over-exaggerated inflection but the delivery is really on point. This is their first release (and the first release for fellow Sheffield punks running the label, Kids of the Lughole) so maybe they are still working out the kinks. More than decent, this is *good*. (AP)
(Kids of the Lughole)

SILVER SHADOWS – 12"

I lost my mind over this band's song on *San Francisco's Doomed,* the tape Hannah Lew put out with a bunch of SF underground groups taking on the specter of tech that is ruining our city. There's a more polished version of that song on this LP, and it still is a sick track in case you missed out of grabbing the comp, but I think I preferred the messiness of the earlier cassette version!? Fans of evocative '80s 4AD styled femmepop with added shoegaze and gothier post-punk tendencies will however lose their brains over this disc, SILVER SHADOWS are masters of their craft! I think I like bands that are a little more rough around the edges, less conscious somehow? I think there are many people reading this who are consumed by shoegaze/darkwave that will adore this, it is really beautiful, dark and foreboding music for dark and foreboding types! A scrappier, basement tapes COCTEAU TWINS made up of the coolest punk girls? (LG)
(Gilgongo)

SIX BREW BANTHA – "Intravenously Commodified" LP

My first exposure to this band, though I've heard the name for a while. Waaaaaaay better than whatever baseless expectations I had going in, this outfit cranks out impossible jams with dizzying precision. Manic and erratic grind that forces you to either pay attention or walk away, songs that defy description, but manage to avoid pretense. The sound is *massive*, and after a few seconds I just spent the rest of the record shaking my head…staring at the speakers. I have no idea how people create sounds like this—*Intravenously Commodified* is razorsharp…and deadly. (WN)
(SPHC / To Live A Lie)

THE SLIT PLASTERS – "Quick Dynamite Party!" EP

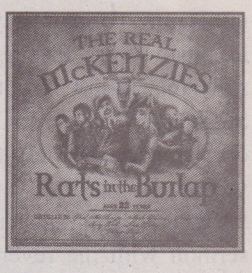
Jagged-edged, clean production havin' and often dull-as-hell modern rock. Their playing is fine but the vocals are somewhat passable. Yet there's really just something that feels like it's way too "Live 105/ Mike Patton-y/Jack White/RockJockBro-y about them. Some shitty party in the future run by some dickweed is gonna play you "Ur Short" and suddenly tell you "hey, rock'n'roll is back, dood!" Welp, I kinda sorta like the B-side that mixes FAILURE and NOMEANSNO. But otherwise, try again fellas. (JD)
(Chorizoloco)

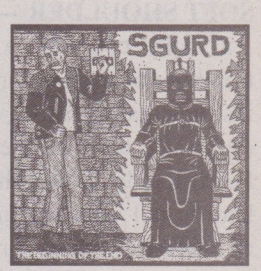
SOAP SCUM – "Very Polite" CD

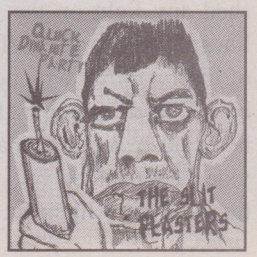
I think it's largely the vocal inflection, but this two piece (drums and guitar) remind me hugely of early (i.e. *Bleach*-era) NIRVANA. They certainly have that grungey/lo-fi sound down. And wear it proudly on their sleeves, even if they can only muster 4 sleeves between 'em! A dozen three-minute pop songs of sorts. If anyone remembers the classic 7"s of the UK's SIX MINUTE WAR, you'll understand instantly what I'm talking about. If that all sounds appealing, it's 'cos it undoubtedly is. (RK)
(self-released)

SOBERANÍA PERSONAL – "Benditos Sean Muñecos Que Pegan" LP

This impressive slice of underground music history was released on 200 tapes in Buenos Aires in 1988, never having enjoyed the vinyl format







until now. I must say, definitely better late than never. Playing an early hardcore style that hasn't forgotten its punk roots, SOBERANÍA PERSONAL is like the convergence of GRB and the BAGS. "En verdad es una gran verdad," on the other hand, is a haunting and slow punk-metal sermon with the reverb cranked up. The powerful and dynamic female vocals are really incredible on this record. At times the riffs recall DISCHARGE infused with enticing bass melodies such as in my favorite track so far, "Maskavidrio." The influence of the irreverent snark of LA POLLA RECORDS is also well played and detectable through their cover of "Socios a la fuerza" and their band name, which is derived from one of the legendary Spanish punk group's verses. From the insert it's evident that this band also ran in the same circles as their friends ATTAQUE 77. In fact, my second favorite song on the record, "Falsas esperanzas," is a cover of ATTAQUE 77's parallel hardcore project DEFENSA Y JUSTICIA which was already defunct at the time of recording this tape. The intelligent lyrics delve deep into the frustration, anger, and disenchantment that coming of age during the bloody Argentine military dictatorship would entail, paired with a searing indictment of machismo in "Supermacho." Props to the label who also pressed the QLOAQA LETAL tape onto wax last year, saving both bands from the dustbin of punk history. So recommended! (LT)
(Metadona)

SOFT SHOULDER — "Fabric" EP

I really could have sworn I heard a trombone on the first song of this single, but instrumentation listed (vocals, guitar, bass, drums and tapes all credited to Mr. James Fella) totally refutes this assumption. It's hard to tell what's going on here. There's an awkwardly phrased riff that plays again, but I have no idea what instruments are playing it. No lyric sheet is available to shed any light on the indiscernible vocal lines. I want to peel off some of the layers of inscrutability wrapped around this song but Fella does not make it too easy. The notes also reference a "donated" music video contributed by - which just reveals more layers (literally: it's a video of a young man removing layer after layer of found overcoats, button ups, dresses and tights). The B-side's groove is easier to settle into, with a 4/4 no wave thud broken up with some static-y guitar soloing. After an Anton Webern meets-HOME BLITZ interlude of atonal pizzicato meanderings, we're back into a further stripped down take of the same song. It's the kind of record you're either compelled to spend more time with or to walk away from—at this point I'm definitely in the first camp. (EW)
(Alien Summer / Gilgongo Records)

SOFT SHOULDER – "Stair" EP

This is a mess of a record…each song tumbles into the next, tossing around mid-paced art-punk / no wave / post-punk punctuated by basic cavernous drumming and skronky, hardly tuned guitars. They even throw in a saxophone and make that shit work. There are traces of DOG FACED HERMANS, CAROLINER and SUN CITY GIRLS, but they keep it short and urgent throughout. Great record. (GH)
(Gilgongo)

SOFT SHOULDER – "Von Guts" EP

Although there's only one title, there seem to be lots of little songs or pieces strung together on each side. When I say pieces, they could be bursts of hiss, rhythmic static, or even sounds that resemble songs: noisy punk, stuff that could be described as industrial, abstract art rock. There's one recurring riff that seems to crop up here and there throughout, to give the bewildered listener something to grasp on to. The lyrics are apparently cribbed from the works of Kurt Vonnegut, hence the title of the record. This was originally released as a cassette and it has the feeling of an early 80s tape trader release. An interesting listen but probably not one I'll repeat too often. (AM)
(Gilongo)

SOUP MOAT – "Enjoy Your Hobbies" EP

1990s stoner grunge noise along the lines of SONIC YOUTH, NIRVANA, and UNSANE combined with some HICKEY pop sensibilities on an island surrounded by a steaming moat of soup. I'm visualizing Italian wedding, but you decide for yourselves. (RO)
(Triple Eye Industries)

THE STACHES – "NYC/ The Girl Who's Been Told"

This is very ethereal. It is shoegazing pop with a female singer. They sound a lot like LUSH. It is pretty, yet dark. "The Girl Who's Been Told" gets a bit more rockin', but still in that style. They are from Switzerland. (CK)
(Frantic City)

STALIN VIDEO – "Animalistik" LP

There is just something that is not working in this collaboration between members of GAGGERS and NOW IN 3D. It's got some good elements. All songs are under two minutes with two under one minute. The singer has this high-pitched bratty whine. The backing vocals sound like macho robots. Yet, the music is played like no one is listening to each other so it sounds like one fast, jumbled mess. They might have needed some more time to work it all out. The record is yellow vinyl with red splatters, which looks pretty. (CK)
(Wanda)

STOP WORRYING & LOVE THE BOMB – "Noun" LP

Wow. You don't often get a furious assault of catchy, melodic punk rock delivered at an almost frenetic pace. Amazing. For all its catchiness, it's got compelling sense of urgency that really grabs your attention. And everybody knows that I'm a fan of female vocals, at that I really appreciate when the female vocals aren't of the real pretty, soft variety. In that respect it sort of reminds me of both BIG EYES and RIVER CITY TANLINES. But it's not all female vocals. Nope, Mike gets his chance to shine on a number of tracks. Well put together and intense, this is an outstanding record. Get off your lazy ass and go find it. (KK)
(Big Neck)

STREETS / X-PULSION – split EP

Pfffwar! Belgium, making me swoon yet again! It was the pivotal year of 1977 and Romantik Records was about to run a flush, pressing to wax four records, featuring five bands and then—poof—by

1978 it was all over. Now, 37 years later, No Good Records has reissued three of those records (check the CHAINSAW and MAD VIRGINS reviews a few pages back) and boy I am happy to get my hands on this because, simply put, "Heaven Only Knows" by X-PULSION is a *perfect* punk cover of a pop song; perhaps you heard it on the *Bloodstains Across Belgium* comp, or you made the connection faster than I did that the original is the SHANGRI-LAS! The music is so beautifully shambolic and eager and deranged; it's splendidly reconstructing this '60s pop song, played at three times the speed, drums galloping, guitar swaying like a smitten drunk punk waving around a broken heart of glass, sharp and bloody. The snotty yet adoring vocals perfectly complement the confession of youthful infatuation described in the lyrics: "Heaven only knows that I need you baby, every time I see you it drives me crazy. [...] Tell me what you want and I'll do it for you, baby let me show you that I adore you." Brothers Klang handle the rhythm section, the bass does a brilliant job of filling out the sound between clattering cymbals and grazing guitars. X-PULSION's second track, "Schmucks/ Castration" is basically two songs smashed together and they're both total scorchers. Peter Schläger's voice on "Schmucks" is the ideal punk nag, an MC5-heavy riff careering alongside a deep and heavy bassline, all backed by crashing drums and lots of clapping! Closer "Castration" could easily be described as proto-hardcore, given the speed of both music and vocals—it's all over in about 45 seconds! Listen and burn! Admittedly, the STREETS flipside feels rather flat in comparison at first, but that's not to say it doesn't grow on you. A hazy/lazy guitar meanders in, a dub-ish beat develops, someone la-la-la-laughs in French, eyes rolling, guitar scatting, bass plodding along...It's titled "Police Control" and sounds like it was recorded in a basement and features the drummer of CHAINSAW on vocals. This EP fucking rules, so just get this already, okay?! (LA)
(No Good)

SUCCESS – "Radio Recovery" CD

From the looks of these guys you would say "Gainesville?" but they are from Washington (the state not the nation's capital). Being on Red Scare, you know this is going to be decent. Pop punk anthems with beards and a little grit. The kings of this sound these days are RED CITY RADIO who these guys sound a little like. Maybe a little like the COPYRIGHTS and DIRECT HIT! too. Although not quite on the level of these bands, they are certainly within striking distance. A good second full-length. (RL)
(Red Scare)

SUICIDAS / TRANCE – split EP

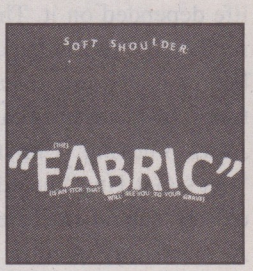
Two bands that are killing it, on one of my favourite labels—what a lovely assignment! TRANCE from Mallorca (interviewed in last month's issue of *MRR)* and Barcelona/Vienna darlings SUICIDAS team up on Mallorca's Metadona Records to deliver four tracks of melodic, morose, catchy punk rock! On their first track, "Sabes quien soy," SUICIDAS land the sweet spot between TERRIBLE FEELINGS and the WIPERS—filtered through a mix of early Spanish punk—but swing decisively more attitude on track two ("Mentiras), which brought to mind that PELUQUERIA CANINA EP I reviewed in *MRR* #380. Track one on the TRANCE side ("Cucarachas muertas devoradas por hormigas") kicks in like an instant classic, with a nervy lead guitar riff, gang vocals and a chorus riff that shines through the gloomy-Sunday-morning-aggravation ambience they seem to have crafted—I want to sandwich this track on a mixtape between the COPYCATS and ARREST. What I like about both bands is that they manage to balance melancholic, aching vocals, shiver-inducing riffs and memorable compositions, without falling pray to clichés or imitation. Instead, both groups seem to be evolving this sound further and I love the direction they're heading in! Grateful I get a reviewer copy of this attractive, stylized, silk-screened EP. (LA)
(Metadona)

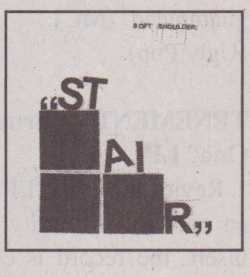
SYSTEMATIK – "Bondage" 12"

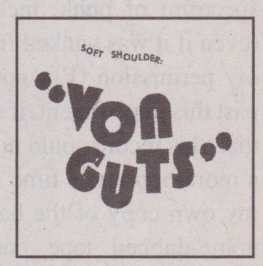
The bass that opens the record is so perfectly menacing, setting the stage for exactly what you knew you were in for when you dropped the needle. And then the vocals goes *BLLEEEEECC* and you are fukkn in it. Bombastic, lightning fast hardcore with searing, sinister vocals that almost manage to take the spotlight from the crisp, distorted guitar attack. Almost, I say, because this brand of mania is driven by that axe—DEATHREAT caliber riffs and delivery, set to a constant galloping thunder. I've seen the band, and knew what to expect, but this eight-song creamer is next level. (WN)
(Sabotage)

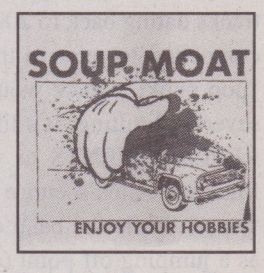
TEENGENERATE – "Live At Shelter" LP

Finally! Ugly Pop comes through in a major way by pressing up TEENGENERATE's lone live album, previously available only as an import CD. Live recording or not, this record serves as one of









the most vicious documents in existence of this truly legendary rock'n'roll band. The performance is just fuckin' nuts (as anyone who saw them would be sure to corroborate), with the band firing off an incalculable amount of energy, having much more in common with hardcore punk than anything resembling garage. All your faves are present and delivered as if life depended on it. The recording quality rivals most of the band's studio efforts to boot, so in several instances, your favorite tunes have never sounded better. I mean, Jesus Fucking Christ, the version of "Let's Get Hurt" heard here could kill an elderly person in mere seconds. Unreal!! A mandatory record for fans and new converts alike. The most powerful and essential record featured in these pages, guaranteed! (MC)
(Ugly Pop)

TENEMENT – "Bruised Music Volume One" LP

Reviewing this LP almost feels like an exercise in futility because within the insert, the record is essentially reviewed seventeen times by folks from all over the spectrum of punk, including yours truly (even if it was yanked from a blog without my permission [I'm not upset]). Looking past this impediment, if one can truly call it that, this record could not have appeared at a more opportune time in my life because my own copy of the band's self-released, home-dubbed tape containing most of these songs broke just last month. This LP compiles early singles, splits and comp tracks dating back to 2008. Some might be compelled to refer to this band's style as "pop punk," which would be apt but also severely limiting. It's like referring to the REPLACEMENTS as "a rock band" or Marshall Allen's entire oeuvre as simply "jazz." While the band does use that style as a jumping off point (especially in these early recordings), they are quick to inject that somewhat staid form with a truckload of energy, entirely unforgettable riffs and more intensity than most hardcore bands making the rounds these days. I would imagine that if the guys in this band were only giving 75% of their energy, it would still be better than most melodic bands' 110%. If you like current melodic punk and you don't have any TENEMENT records in your collection, you are seriously fucking up. Even though this is a collection of songs recorded in different places and (I'm assuming) on a variety of recording gear, the band has managed to congeal it into a cohesive, singular sounding LP, which is not an easy task. It's the sound of young dreams flying free, unburdened by the true horror of life yet to come. (GH)
(Grave Mistake / Toxic Pop)

TERVEET KÄDET – "Lapin Helvetti" LP

What words have yet to be said about the godfathers of Finnish hardcore? I saw them recently for the first time and was not disappointed by the pure and honest chaos that the band has maintained since day one. So It's *thirty-fucking-five* years since their first record, and TERVEET KÄDET is still writing frantic and cool hardcore songs. The metallic element is present but secondary, and only in some of the riffing. Läjä's vocals are as alarming and distinct as ever. Ääretön Joulu will always remain the top TK stuff in my heart, but it's awesome to see hear a legendary band continuing to rage on and remain relevant. (MA)
(SPHC)

THIRTY SIX STRATEGIES – "Strategy Three" CD

First full-length (and third release—who would've guessed!?) from these Brit melodic hardcore punkers. They proudly take their influences from Revolution Summer-era D.C. bands. And this could easily be that much anticipated RITES OF SPRING reunion album, albeit with a suitably husky female lead vocalist. They more than ably play with and develop such "hallowed" sounds, along with a suitable dash of well, Britishness, as exemplified by the rather fine cover of the PARTISANS "I Never Needed You." Much of the best of UK hardcore (SNUFF, LEATHERFACE et al.) proudly flaunted their Yank influences, while making it all their own. These lads and lassies are no exception, and I eagerly await the (presumed) 33 releases to follow! (RK)
(Boss Tuneage)

TOE TAG – 12"

A limited edition one-sided vinyl issue of the eight songs on their split CD with WORLD OF LIES from 2009, Seattle's TOE TAG's features Blaine from the FARTZ and the ACCUSED as well as a couple other guys from the ACCUSED. They start from the same Splatterrock™ metal riffs and sneered vocals but grind deeper on a center of mid-tempo rock riffage. They still infuse everything with enough energy, inventiveness and in-the-red verve that it's a compelling quick spin, replete with ACCUSED-styled bleak, horror and '70s underground comix style sexscapade lyrics. The cover is an almost successful rework of Mad Marc Rude's Classic MISFITS *Earth A.D.* artwork. A no-brainer for ACCUSED and FARTZ fans. (KS)
(Behind the Mountain)

TOMB AND THIRST – "Wrath" LP

New Haven, Connecticut's TOMB AND THIRST crawls along the border of sludge. They crawl and lurch and sometimes blast in a very dark way. Everything is bass-driven, noisy and somewhat discordant. It's such a unique mix of sludge, grindcore and punk that I can't really think of anyone they sound like. I think I hear a little BASTARD NOISE. It's a beautiful mess. The B-side of the LP is extremely dark industrial noise in the vein of COIL doing a movie soundtrack or LUSTMORD. It's ambient and has the feeling of being recorded in a large empty warehouse. Feedback and drums do show up by the end of the second side. I hope these guys keep working out these ideas because I'm into this record. (MH)
(Safety Meeting)

TOŽIBABE – "Dežuje" EP

Classic ex-Yugo punk, back in print, AND on clear yellow wax, no less! This record was originally released in 1986, at the tail end of TOŽIBABE's career, their only vinyl offering save for the tracks they contributed to the seminal *Hard-Core Ljubljana* LP. Dark and burly, featuring charming thunderstorm samples and synth-produced tolling bells, there's more than a hint of the gothic here, but don't get it twisted: this is hardcore. The band apparently rotated instruments when playing live and in the studio, the kind of unhindered experimentation that is impossible to fake. The singer (though perhaps that

role rotated too?) is a perfect frontperson for this rudimentary, driving hardcore band, alternately talking, screaming, and singing…An essential point in the constellation of suppressed women-in-punk histories, this record has been bootlegged before, but this is an official reissue, authorized by the band, who reunited to play one gig earlier this year. It comes with a thick booklet, which reproduces photographs, write-ups, and interviews—including one in from the May 1986 issue of *MRR*, where Marsa praises USHC and disses DISCHARGE, RUDIMENTARY PENI, and AMEBIX ("I used to like [them]… Many of the European bands are stupid, like many English bands that don't say anything except that they're vegetarians.") The scene that existed in '80s Yugoslavia is a fascinating one, centered around Radio Študent and fostered by Igor Vidmar—pick up a copy of *MRR* #378, our Slovenian special to read a recent interview with the band and find out more! (GA)
(FV / Ne!)

TRASH KIT – "Confidence" LP

In a world of exhausting genre exercises and corpse revivals, TRASH KIT is proof positive that familiar phrases can still be deconstructed and exuberantly rearranged. The British group traffics in the recognizable post-punk polyrhythms of the RAINCOATS or the SLITS—busy drums, dub influenced bass, a patent refusal to play chords, a subtle saxophone here and there—with extraordinary results, yielding songs which are alternately buoyant and dark, anxious and, errr, confident. Every track seems to sprout from the same seed before rapidly blooming in different directions, rhizomatic and expansive, electrifying reminders of the possibility that remains within a well-worn vocabulary. This is a great record. (GA)
(Upset the Rhythm)

T-TOPS – "A Certain Cordial Exhilaration" LP

T-TOPS shred through nine tracks of plodding HELMET-esque jammers, all with a vocal delivery like JESUS LIZARD. It's plodding and repetitive, heavy and loose. This record definitely fits in with a lot of the more contemporary alt revival acts that are coming outta the USA, like CALIFORNIA X, but with less of a DINOSAUR JR. vibe and more of a HIGH ON FIRE type groove. I found myself wondering if the guitars were tuned to drop D on this LP. It seems like that would be the case. For Fans of: Army fatigue cargo shorts (cut off or pre-sewn), tall cans, tater tots. (MW)
(Big Neck)

UHRIT – "Kuili" CD

Dang a minute-long reverbed-out cello intro to some pretty straightforward stop and start crust-as-fuck punk. The cello doesn't stop there and goes into the first song, but unlike OROKU, where the ever-amazing Lisa weaves her instrument seamlessly through the song, this kinda just stands out like a sore thumb. It gets better on the second track, "Jatkuvan Pelon Alla/Under Constant Fear," where they take notes from STATE OF FEAR and bring some pummelling riffs and one crushing breakdown. The rest of the record is pretty much the same. If they would stick to just crust and cut out a lot of this melodic stuff they would be an amazing and seriously heavy band, but for now it's just meh. (AP)
(Fight)

ULTRATHIN – LP

This Montreal trio certainly lays the volume on thick for only three people. A heavily layered guitar sound emits persistent melodic chimes through a dense fog of fuzzy, percussive noise rock. Occasionally the band will break out of its lockstep march to skate into psych territory, firing off bursts of staccato squall. They play it pretty straight on a cover of the PAGANS' "Real World" though. The singer's bark recalls Mark E. Smith via Chris Thomson's vocals for CIRCUS LUPUS. If this record is missing anything, I might say the dynamics are slightly lacking. It's pretty much full volume from start to finish, and by the time I'd got through the four minutes and 45 seconds of the last song, my ears needed a rest. Overall, not a bad debut LP though. (AM)
(Bruised Tongue)

UNIFORM CHOICE – "1982 Orange Peel Sessions" EP

Long story short, it's insane to me that UNIFORM CHOICE has a 1982 demo with *zero* members of the band that play on the 1984 demo or *Screaming for Change* anywhere to be found. UxCx's "interpretation" of MINOR THREAT-style hardcore was a major staple of my youth, especially that '84 demo double-7". With said, this demo from two years earlier sounds *nothing* like the OCHC band that we all know and love. Instead this recording session could have fallen from any volume of the *Killed By Death* comps. Think a crude, garage-y, Southern California version of something like the JERRY'S KIDS tracks on *This is Boston Not L.A.* Highly recommended and such a cool look into the (second) earliest incarnation of this iconic band. (JU)
(Dr. Strange)

USELESS EATERS – "Singles: 2011-2014" LP

As the title says this is a compilation of hard-to-find singles from labels such as Goodbye Boozy, Nashville's Dead, Jeffery Dream, Tic Tac Totally, etc. USELESS EATERS is mostly a one man band with the exception of some guest players on a few songs including TY SEGALL. The songs are a catchy bunch of trashy garage punk. The vocals are abrasive and caustic. Combined with a willingness to slow things down or speed them up as needed, he really makes a nice bunch of noise. (CK)
(Slovenly)

THE VICTIM PARTY – "Getting To Know The Victim Party" LP

At first, this didn't seem like my cup of tea. Sort of anthem-y pop punk, but it's soaking in tons of angst and booze (I think) and it's really fucking fun! Multiple vocalists, and a party vibe that has me missing SOOPHIE NUN SQUAD. Each song off this album is a mini bio about all the members of the band, which sounds like some hokey ass bullshit, right? It's not. It's sweet and smart, pretty, powerful, and positive without being sickening or preachy, and I kind of love it. Bonus points because the female vocalist kills it L.A.M.F., it's really tight. I dinked around on the internets and saw that this record comes with a graphic novel. I bet these guys are pretty sweet nerds, and I want to see them. (DZ)
(Ugly Pop)

THE VICTIM PARTY – "Hard Drugs/ Soft Drinks"

I'm a sucker for the alternating male/ female vocal thing. I fall for it every time. This one is mid-tempo, very rock'n'roll, and the melodies are contagious. The B-side, in particular, is like anthem rock, but both songs seem to start off catchy and manage to get catchier as they go along. (KK)
(Safe Haven)

VIOLENT REACTION – "Marching On" LP

Good to see Rev getting back into the non-reissue, regular-ass HC ring, and the second album from Britain's VIOLENT REACTION is a perfect comeback match up. *Marching On* sees the band with cleaner, more confident and seemingly less "hard" songwriting than on the last LP, *City Streets*. With that said, I like this record quite a bit more. The hooks are there, the riffs are there, the fury is there, and the tunes are there. Between VIOLENT REACTION, CROWN COURT, and the FLEX, this crew is really showing force for their side of the pond. (JU)
(Revelation)

VLASTA POPIĆ – "Kvadrat" CD

Bass-heavy noise / proper indie rock and punk from Croatia. There's lots of disjointed guitars vocals in Croatian which, like other Slavic languages, is a really great language for music. Loads of push-pull tempos, sharp guitar tones, and big strums the way it outta be—no snoozy *Pitchfork*-approved/trendy fest moves here—imagine a faster SHELLAC and maybe a less-spastic and way more interesting RODAN. On the other hand, they do some excellent straight up punker tunes like on "Slijepa Nasa [Mrznja]," as well as a sort of SONIC YOUTH-y style on "Mastanje." The rest of the album gets slower for a few songs (but still captivating) and plays around with different vocals and structures. And lest I forget—the *incredible* "O vodi" gives off a real SCRAWL (Ohio) style. Very recommended! (JD)
(Moonlee)

XAXAXA – "Sami mazi i zeni" CD

Third full-length from this Macedonian quartet, most of whom used to be in BERNAYS PROPAGANDA. They sing in their native tongue, which is always a plus in my book, even if it means I can't really read theirs. Fortunately, they do perform the international lingua franca of melodic hardcore. In their case, that almost indie-rock/post-punk sound of tail-end HÜSKER DÜ, or a clean (albeit layered) LEATHERFACE with smooth, ethereal vocals. I suspect they grew up on a steady diet of DAG NASTY's "Field Day," and you could do a lot worse, I reckon. Nothing new, nothing extraordinary, but pretty damn good, nonetheless. (RK)
(Moonlee)

ZACK ZACK – "Wir Haben Zeit" LP

Upbeat '77 snot/power pop stuff here from these Berlin punks. Jerky riffs, catchy tunes, and pogo-worthy rhythms. Maybe imagine a less poppy BRIEFS, with German vocals. It looks like this was recorded in 2010 and originally came out in 2012. I'm not sure why we're reviewing it now—is this a reissue?—but I've just been to Berlin and they're at least five years behind anyway so this will seem current and timely. (AM)
(Modern Action)

THE ZOLTARS – LP

This Texas band is walking a tightrope between far-too-cutesy indie pop and something a little more off and appealing. At their best, Zoltars recall MODERN LOVERS (see "Sincere" and "Out Of My Head"). Unfortunately, those moments are scant and counteracted far too often by sweetie-pie pop that, while pleasant, is nearly devoid of punk. (MC)
(Happenin)

V/A – "Beach Impediment Presents... Hardcore Gimme Some More" EP

Just one glance at the line-up on this comp should turn the head of even the most jaded hardcore fanatic. Once again, Beach Impediment delivers the goods, this time throwing together six of the hardest hitting maniacs in this hardcore game. We've got S.H.I.T. (Toronto, ON), PEACEBREAKERS (Boston, MA), MERCENARY (Atlanta, GA), IMPALERS (Austin, TX), VIOLENT END (Chicago, IL), and AJAX (New York, NY) all crammed onto a concise little platter that basically defines the sound of contemporary hardcore in 2015. Having been lucky enough to see five out of the six bands represented here, I can easily say that this in an exceptional bunch on the live front as well. Apparently these songs are exclusive to this comp, so if you are a fan of any one of these hardcore bruisers, pick this up immediately. (JK)
(Beach Impediment)

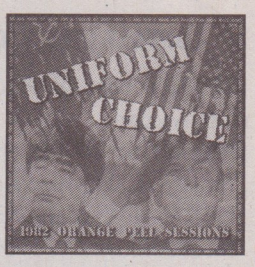
V/A – "Destroy Poserton" LP

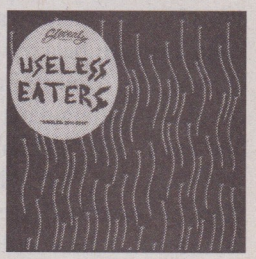
This is an incredible compilation! There's not much info about the origins of this record, but I assume the people who bring

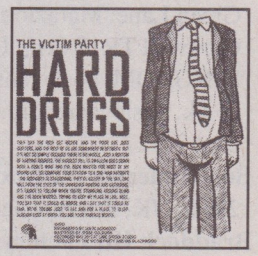
us the comic-zine *Life Is Posers* are behind it. I'm baffled by the fact that they put together such a varied and amazing compilation by such heavy hitters of the punk community. It seems almost…unreal. First off, I wanna say that it's fucking awesome to finally have a "studio" version of the straightforward punk anthem of KONTRA:DICTION's "Just Another Day." The last time I saw them at the Boiler Room, the cops showed up…not because of the bands, but because of the punks out in the street screaming the chorus, "Just another day in the life of a punk!!!" for two hours straight. Fucking classic! BURDEN OF HUMANITY also makes an appearance, playing their style of hardcore that would lead you to believe that they leave their singer in a cage feeding him only raw meat until it's time to record. Fans of DISAFFECT take note!! Somehow, the organizers of this comp tracked down KIDS OF ALRIGHT (the *actual kids of the members of* TOM AND BOOT BOYS), who obviously took some notes from their dads. The fuckin' knobheads in PROPER LADS take some time out of their busy working class schedule to bring you another flawless Oi! classic to listen to while shitting your life away on the dole. It's good to see that someone could get END ZONE out of the gym and off of BOSTON STRANGLER's balls long enough to record their best throwdown sXe hardcore jam to date. CHEAP, one of the only true peace punk bands left on this fucking planet surprisingly contributed a track. Last I heard, they didn't want to put out records because it contributed the destruction of the Earth. I probably shouldn't put this in print, but they fucking *killed* the person who put out a vinyl bootleg of their demo. I guess the tides have shifted in their ten years of existence. The BRATTY ATTITUDES finish off the record and it was nice of the organizers to give some space to these kids. They're obviously just finding their voice and owe a little too much to WHO KILLED SPIKEY JACKET?, but they're off to a promising start. Overall, this is a totally unreal compilation showcasing bands from all over the map of punk and hardcore. If you don't already own this, you might be a poser. (GH)
(Total Fucker)

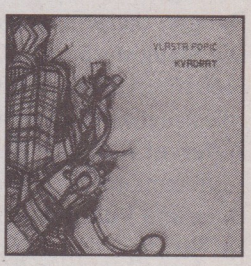
V/A – "Four On Fur" EP

Apparently the coords thought this record would be the one to send me over the edge and I'd never be heard from again. Ha! It's not going to be that easy. Yeah, the packaging is rather juvenile. There are a bunch of vintage strippers in various stages of undress on the cover. The label is named Fuck U Records. The record is described as "A sexy trashy sleazy dirty lusty juicy yummy smelly compilation." However, the music is pretty good. There are four French bands: BRAIN EATERS, WASHINGTON DEAD CATS, NO HIT MAKERS and MEXACALI SWINGERS. They all have a vintage sound—garage, rockabilly, rockabilly and surf, respectively. It sounds pretty cool. (CK)
(Fuck U)









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Hafner: 437 Randolph St., San Francisco, CA 94132, hafner.bandcamp.com/music, facebook.com/hafnerband
Happenin Records: happeninrecords.com
Hardware Records: PO Box 1646, 49006 Osnabrück, GERMANY, hardware-records.com
Hosehead: 3561 Main St., Vancouver, BC V5V3N4, CANADA, hoseheadrecords.ca
Hostage: PO Box 5401 Huntington Beach, CA 92615, hostagerecords.com
Insane Society: insanesociety.net
Kids of the Lughole: kidsofthelughole.bandcamp.com
KOTJ Records: kotjrecords.blogspot.com, kotjrecords.bandcamp.com, KOTJ.records@yahoo.com
Lilla Himmel: lillahimmel.wordpress.com
Lookout Mountain Daredevils: jaimie.vayda@gmail.com
Love Lanes: lovelanes.bandcamp.com
Man In Decline Records: manindeclinerecords.com
Modern Action: PO Box 1452, Sonoma, CA 95476, modernactionrecords.com
MoonLee: Krizevniska 5, 1000, Ljubljana, Slovenia, moonleerecords.com
Mutilated Noise Records: mutilatednoiserex@gmail.com
Ne!: nerecords.se
Nerve Beats: chraviswiggins@gmail.com
No Good Records: nogoodrecords.com, info@nogoodrecords.com
Pulling Punches: pullingpunches@gmail.com
Ranch: ranchrecords.bigcartel.com
Red Scare: PO Box 13285 Chicago, IL 60613, redscare.net
Replay: replayrecordsusa.com
Revelation: P.O. Box 5232 Huntington Beach, CA 92615-5232, revelationrecords.com
Rock Action: rockaction.co.uk
Rosa Vertov: rosavertov.com
Solar Flare: solareflarerds.com, solareflarerds@gmail.com
Ruin Nation: ruinationhq.blogspot.com
Sabotage: info@sabtoagerecords.net
Safety Meeting Records: 196 Norton St. #2 New Haven, CT 06511, safetymeeting.net
Screen Test: screentestprinting@gmail.com
Sex Sheet: sexsheetrecords.com
Shield: Blazoenstraat 32, 5021 DM Tilburg, NETHERLANDS, shieldrecordings.com
Skuld: skuldreleases.de
Slovenly: PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504, slovenly.com
Soap Scum: soapscum.bandcamp.com
Sorry State: sorrystaterecords.com
SPHC Records: sphcrecords.bandcamp.com
Still Ill: stillillhc.com
Taken By Surprise: Michael Krenner, Landsberger Str. 3, 80339, München, GERMANY, takenbysurprise.net
Tangled Talk Records: tangledtalk.com
To Live A Lie: tolivealie.com
Total Fucker: whokilledfucker.blogspot.com
Total Punk: floridasdying.com
Toxic Pop: 2619 Guilford Ave, Baltimore, MD 21218, toxicpoprecords.com
Triple Eye Industries: tripleeyeindustries.com
Trujaca Fala: trujacafala.com
Ugly Pop: uglypop.bigcartel.com
Upset the Rhythm: upsettherhythm.co.uk
Up the Punx: upthepunxrecords.bandcamp.com
Use Your Head: facebook.com/UseYourHeadRecords
Sorry State: sorrystaterecords.com
Viral Age: viralagerecords.blogspot.com
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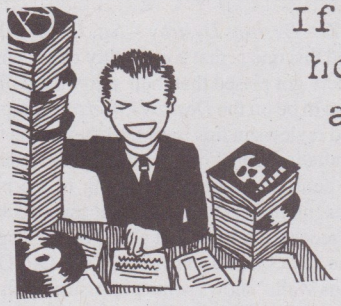

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DEMOS

Send cassettes and CD-Rs to: MRR Attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide contact information and a post-paid price! Please note, anything other than vinyl or CD will be reviewed in this section. CD-Rs with no artwork will not be considered. Reviews by Matt Badenhop, Heather Blotto, Robert Collins, Greg Harvester, Mike Leslie, Sean Nieves-Quiñones, and Heather Wreckage.

A.D. SKINNER – *Dicksweat* – Motherfuckers! I was ready to not like this because of the name, but it's so good! Simple and direct fucking punk with a straightforward, jangly guitar and ugly, shouted vocals. Fuckin' great! It was all over in the time it took me to write these sentences! To the point! Hooks that stay in your stupid ass head! Excellent shit! Australians kill it again… (Greg) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, adskinner.bandcamp.com)

ABSOLUT – *Hell's Highest Power Promo* – Fucking massive Swedish-styled D-beat crust shit from Toronto. Very much in the tradition of later ANTI CIMEX, but with the immense power and intimidation that is felt when I crank BOMBANFALL. While the fluid drumming and "500-foot monster hollering across a canyon" vocals are top-notch, it's totally about the guitars here. This guitarist has some serious moves—the kinda shit that makes you laugh in disbelief when he throws in these mega-metal squeals all of a sudden, and instead of being lame it just sounds completely awesome. The second track alone is just mind-scrambling and fully knocks the wind out of me every time (five times so far). What the fuck? I don't usually even care about bands doing this style, but y'all got my attention and I am totally fucking on board with this. (Matt) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, runstate-tapes.com)

ACTUAL CRIMES – I had high hopes for this tape because the J-card was so pretty and unfolds into a big ol' lyric sheet, but you know what they say...you can't judge a book by it's cover. ACTUAL CRIMES are a three-piece from London and are definitely on the indie/alternative end of the spectrum. Very reminiscent of SONIC YOUTH, and it's cool if you like that kind of thing. My only complaint (and I feel like a total jerk writing this) (but also it's true) is that the main singer sounds monotone and/or tone deaf. You know how Exene Cervenka is like that in X? It's like that but way more high-pitched. (Wreckage) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, actualcrimes.bandcamp.com)

ANTI CIMEX – *The Lost Mixes* – Here are four previously released tracks—two from *Absolute Country of Sweden*, two from *Scandanavian Jawbreaker*—presented in their original mix. The story in the liner notes tells us that when all the members got home with this mix, they decided to do it one more time, which resulted in what got released. Turns out all these years later they actually like this mix better, so it gets a reissue. I always preferred their earlier material before the metallic influences crept in, so I don't recall the quality of the mixes on those records. I imagine these are rawer. Mega CIMEX fans should get this I guess. I'll stick with the raw fury of the first three EPs. (Matt) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, Black Konflik, PO Box 28, 27600 Raub, Pahang MALAYSIA)

BAZZ – *Destroy Destroy* – So, I guess the story behind this one is that some shitty chaos punx from nowhere got pissed that their shitty band didn't get chosen to be on the *Destroy Poserton* comp LP (see record reviews in this issue), so they made this tape in retaliation. Most of this shit is your basic boring crust punk about beer, slamming in the pit, punk houses, more beer and how their town sucks. They even recorded a song that slams every single band on the LP compilation (except the OPPOSERS). "Chaos Walk" shows some promise though and has some good riffs. If they always tried that hard, they could probably open up for LEFTOVER CRACK, but in reality, these dudes are gonna waste their time trashing Howie the house punk's place and getting fucked on pills. Sucks for them. (Greg) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, lifeisposers.bigcartel.com)

BLIND DOG – This is really fucking good! I can imagine walking through a muddy backyard covered in empty beercans and into a dark and dirty basement with leaky pipes and angsty, alienated punk weirdos dancing to this band. This is the kind of punk (hardcore at times) that I love; the music sticks to the punk formula, but there is so much gloom and grime and turmoil added to the mix that it becomes a whole different beast. What really stands out for me about this band are the vocals, which are extra raw and fuzzy, almost giving you a Monty Buckles (of the LAMPS) experience. I don't know if that is on purpose or because of recording quality, but if I had to pick I would say it's on purpose. P.S. The art on the J-card is tight! (Wreckage) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, blinddog.bandcamp.com)

BROKEN CACHARRO – Their bandcamp describes their sound as noisecore, which is exactly the word I was looking for. It also says they use mostly broken instruments, which definitely adds some punk points. BROKEN CACHARRO is hardcore for the most part, but the keyboard or computer or whatever it is adds a sci-fi element to it all. I found little traces of MELT BANANA and FAITH NO MORE, plus the maybe-keyboard parts reminded me at times of the LOST SOUNDS. There is a lot going on here, and while it's not necessarily my taste, maybe it could be yours. (Wreckage) (11-song CD-R, lyrics included, brokencacharro.bandcamp.com)

CAMPAIGN – *Enemies* – Anthemic hardcore with a plethora of *whoa-whoa-oas* and a singer who will make some band famous someday (maybe even this one?). This is commercial sounding club punk but the songs are good and the production is heavy, so fukk it. (Robert) (8-song cassette, no lyrics, itlikestoparty.com)

CHILLED MONKEY BRAINS – *Apeocalypse* – Oh, this is a real band? They went on Warped Tour? I pulled this outta the bin cuz I thought it would be funny and musically impressive like that SATANARCHIST CD-R I got a few months ago. Turns out that this is an intentional attempt at blending punk, ska, and metal. The part happening right now as I type sounds like DREAM THEATER…and the singer does that nasally Fat Mike voice a lot. I've actually never heard dueling metal guitar leads so close to ska parts with horns before, so I guess they've blown my mind a little bit, but boy does this blow! (Matt) (12 song CD-R, lyrics not included, chilledmonkeybrains.org)

COLLAGEN – *Demo '15* – Super new band from beautiful Victoria, Bee Cee, Canada! These kids play slamming d-beat hardcore not unlike G.L.O.S.S. , their contemporaries and neighbors to the south. Loving the blown-out and delayed vocals, punctuated occasionally by shrieks or just the highest pitched *hoooo* I've ever heard. Five songs in about five minutes. Doing it right. Their enclosed note states that they started this past January and recorded this demo the following month, and I have to say the results are impressive! (Sean) (5-song tape, lyrics included, tytyakis@hotmail.com, 778-676-PUNX, 2726 Prior St Victoria, BC CANADA V8T 3Y1)

CONCEALED BLADE – I have never heard a hardcore band do so many little dive-bombs. Those whammy-bars are getting lots of action here—like literally multiple times every song. Otherwise this is pretty straightforward but powerful East Coast flavored hardcore. There are some breakdowns to get this generation of "mutants" frisky in the pit, and one mid-tempo stomper, but mostly this is akin to the first SSD LP. The vocalist especially has many extreme Springa moments. Either this band is already hot and I'm too busy tracking down '80s Deutschpunk records, or they're about to blow the fuck up. (Matt) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, concealedblade.bandcamp/com)

CONDITIONS – *Fight Nothingness* – Weirdo electronic sounds from the same crew that will bring you EXIT BAG and PRISON LIBRARY later in this section. As with their punk outfits, CONDITIONS offer a complete lack of fidelity, a generally off-putting vibe, and a primitive approach to sound. You cannot really manufacture sounds like this, you just have to be a mutant. For fans of SPARKS, ART OF NOISE, THROBBING GRISTLE and early CABARET VOLTAIRE who feel like their current musical tastes are just a little too palatable. CONDITIONS are here to help. (Robert) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, □ Albacore Records, 972 Stanford Ave, Oakland, CA 94608, yacobdafisk@hotmail.com)

DATA CONTROL / SNAKE – SNAKE is three ladies doing catchy and cold punk with lots of memorable moments. The vocals carry strong melodies over a thick layer of keyboard and guitar. They are excellent at their craft and the sound is top-notch all the way through three songs. DATA CONTROL continues in the tradition of their first demo by doing both melodic HÜSKER DÜ-influenced punk with some faster hardcore fueled moments. Sounds like there were some chimes laying around in the studio, as they get a tinkle during the fastest song, creating an interesting feel. Rock solid split by these two Swedish bands. (Matt) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, facebook.com/Xenomorftnrratr)

DURS COEURS – Straight guitar-drenched punk from Ottawa. The anthemic vocal styling in French brings to mind some old French Oi!, but these guys don't seem to be necessarily touting Oi! aesthetics. Catchy stuff that recalls CRIMINAL DAMAGE as well as Spain's INSOMNIO. (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, durscoeurs@gmail.com, runstate-tapes.com)

EVERYDAY OBJECTS – This is some rapid punk with a wacky vocal style from Cincinnati. Frantic strumming and hi-hatting make for a pretty driving result. The vocals make the whole thing just maniacal sounding, which is kinda cool, but does get grating after a while. The lyrics are totally weird, but in an interesting way. RUDIMENTARY PENI meets the DICKIES? (Matt) (12 song cassette, lyrics included, mincemaim@gmail.com)

EXIT BAG – *Wonky Heavy…We Didn't Write Endings For Any Of Them* – Oakland weirdo outsider punk/no wave shits. Heavy and discordant depressive tunes seemingly lacking all pretense… and perhaps any desire to please a single soul aside from themselves (and maybe not even those souls). Of course, in doing so they create an incredibly compelling document. Noisy, damaged, plodding punk that simply doesn't give a fukk. (Robert) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, Albacore Records, 972 Stanford Ave, Oakland, CA 94608, yacobdafisk@hotmail.com)

FACILITY MEN – I've reviewed these guys before and I'm not sure what I was snorting at that time, but I compared them to melodic punk and surf-rock, which is definitely *not* the case. Revisiting their songs now, I'm realizing that they're approaching punk from a post-hardcore sound but injecting it with more rock riffs than many of their contemporaries. They dangle somewhere between the worlds of garage punk and hardcore, but manage to avoid the clichés of both worlds. The songs on this tape are culled from their original demo and some newer tracks. The demo songs are remixed and beefier sounding than the original, making for a more pleasant listening experience. Ex-members of PLATES. (Greg) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, Black Dots, 223 Lafayette Ave, Buffalo, NY 14213, blackdotsbuffalo.com)

FLYKILLS – *Lump Of Flesh* – Catchy, mid-tempo New York action with sinister, snarly vokills that stand in opposition to the brooding dark punk tunes. A touch of RUDIMENTARY PENI, but FLYKILLS verge on rock'n'roll more than that comparison implies. A legitimately (if slightly) different take on the shit that's sweeping punk—I'm into it. (Robert) (4-song cassettre, lyrics included, flykillzzzz@gmail.com)

GAST – Honestly, when I put this on, my reaction was "*Great, another goth post-punk band*" but that changed as the first track "Lost" kicked in full force. A lot of bands are doing the '80s chorus-guitar deathrock sound these days, but GAST play it with energy, conviction and full-on hardcore fury. The lyrics to "Recuerdo" are genuinely moving. (Sean) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, gastpunx.bandcamp.com, jkparmer89@gmail.com)

GLAZER – Seven songs of post-hardcore indie rock from New Jersey harkening back to the sounds of 1995. The music kind of rides that newgaze alt-rock sound with moments that remind me a lot of HUM, CHAVEZ and, less so, SILKWORM. "Carried Away," the first song of Side Two, really stands out, featuring main vocals by the drummer Nneka, and musical affectations that hint at the sonic territory of oft-unknown Tasmanian band SEA SCOUTS. Y'all really got me with the extended krautrock closing jam. Great job! (Sean) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, glazernj@gmail.com, glazer.bandcamp.com, 1194 Livingston Ave New Brunswick, NJ 08902)

HOT MAYONNAISE – *Bathroom Tapes Vol. 1* – An attempt at manly buttrock that is far too obviously tongue in cheek, but still somewhat successful. The band jams in a solid '70s heavy metal sense—four on the floor rock 'n roll power with screaming leads, stripped and raw—but the vocals sound like a STOOGES parody routine and make it hard to take any of this even remotely serious (because they obviously don't). However, the band might be hard enough for me to give them a pass. Maybe, I'm still not sure. (Robert) (4-tracks cassette, no lyrics, hotmayonnaisemusic@gmail.com)

HUMAN ADULT BAND – *Small Mutant Fish Group* – Improv guitar drone from these longtime freaks of New Jersey. Wild stabs at drumming flail over a few layers of skronky guitar noodles that soon devolve into knob turning and half-tuned somber meditations. For fans of BILL ORCUTT and *Trd Wrd records*. Only 13 tapes made. (Greg) (??-song tape, lyrics not included, dihd.net)

IDAHO GREEN – *Do the Nelz* – Poppy rock'n'roll punk with empassioned, harmonized, melodic vocals and horns. Some tracks have a '60s pop influence that you could probably do the twist to. It's too clean to be garage but might be a close cousin. "Knight of 100 Hamms" starts with a long sample/instrumental intro, breaking into screaming vocals maxed out and compressed hard (like HICKEY vocals on the radio), then an infectiously simple guitar lead that will get stuck in your head for days. More compressed screaming. "Cowgirl Blues" is a slow jam that sounds like the GRATEFUL DEAD and I am 99% sure it's ironic but you still have to listen to it for almost three minutes to get through the tape. I think we've reached the point where punks can admit it if they like the GRATEFUL DEAD without getting their ass kicked. It's not like having a crush on Reagan or something. And then these weird duck or freaky kissing sounds come in and it ends with a nauseating DAVE MATTHEWS groan—which is gross even if it's ironic. (Blotto) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, idahogreen.bandcamp.com)

IVAN AND THE BACKPACKERS / OBAT BATUK – *split* – OBAT BATUK is noisy, enthusiastic, reckless punk with some rock'n'roll influence. There's definitely a deranged undertone here, although group vocals at times make for some pretty sing-along-able moments. A variety of sounds and tempos keep you on your toes. The music keeps it simple, with power chords matching bass lines, alternating between catchy progressions to super fast parts that are kind of all over the fretboard. After the punk songs end there's some weird electronic sounds and unintelligible college-radio announcer talking. Sort of like listening to someone play Asteroid while the radio is coming through your telephone on accident while you are trying to take a nap. It's unclear if this is part of the band's work or if they just ran out of songs and needed to put something on the tape. The IVAN AND THE BACKPACKERS side delivers similarly noisy, angry songs with team-vocals and tight, fast drumming. There is one guitar solo which is pretty catchy, but most of the tape is a series of minimal fast hardcore parts and breakdowns followed by more breakdowns. The catchy parts are the group vocals. Songs come in an sometimes dropping off in what seems like the middle. Kind of reminds me of "TV Party" era BLACK FLAG but less technical and less likely to get stuck in your head. The whole recording is fuzzy, it's not just a guitar pedal. Every time the cymbals come in the song crackles and blows out. When the music ends there's more mysterious talking that actually seems like it might be an ad for the record label, Webmaster Records. It comes off as tacky to put an ad on a demo tape for the label that put it out. I know we're all used to waiting through five seconds of a Lysol commercial to watch puppies yawning on YouTube, but that doesn't mean punks need to start putting ads on demo tapes. (Blotto) (13-song split cassette, lyrics not included, webmasterrecords@gmail.com)

LODE RUNNER – This is an interesting one. New wave-influenced, drum machine-driven post-punk from Moscow, Russia. There's a heavy '80s synth vibe happening here. It's really bouncy and it falls somewhere between SIOUXSIE and NEW ORDER, but I feel like it would be more compelling if it had vocals!! No vocals! On the other hand, it makes it a little *more interesting* that there are no vocals. I picture this as perfect driving music…like driving 100 mph down a barren highway in the dead of winter or being trapped in an '80s video game. Side B of the tape is the band's first single (one song) repeated over and over. (Greg) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, loderunnerband.bandcamp.com)

LOS JACKS – *Toledo Ponkeros Vol 1* – This is very punk-rock'n'roll! I'm imagining lots of leather jackets and cheap beers in some nasty Midwestern basements. Most songs border on street punk whoa-oh territory, with a couple of songs ("Rekiem," "Canción Para Jaime") veering into the sound of "I was born in a small town" b/w the VELVET UNDERGROUND by way of BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN. Those melodic crooners are the standout tracks, as well as tape closer "Ministros de la Muerte," which features some really cool percusión latino. (Sean) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, lcodrnr@hotmail.com, losjacks.bandcamp.com, 2538 Beaufort Ave, Toledo, OH 43613)

MANANA COUCH – "Ho Ho's and Meds" is a wonderful name for a song, but I have a hard time

getting into the song itself. They follow that up with "Park Slope Chicks," which is a steaming pile of horse shit that (I think) manages to combine sexist tropes and cop hatred? Hard to tell with a slurring singer and no lyric sheet. The music is hard rock-styled punkish stuff with some run-of-the-mill riffs. The singer sounds like Chris Farley in that "van down by the river" skit from *SNL*. (Greg) (5-song CD-R, lyrics not included, mananacouch.com)

MARRÓN – It's not often that a demo, a band, or a sound can so instantly transport you, but that's exactly what MARRÓN does. There's barely six minutes of music here…and it moves the listener instantly to a world of '90s DC emo/hardcore, impossibly addictive and executed flawlessly. Vocals have that indescribably sensitive/masculine rasp *(for the record, that is, in this instance, a gender neutral descriptor)* and are the obvious focus of the demo, but these songs are…well, understated brilliance is what they are. This is as close to perfect as I can ever hope for, and I hoped for a lot when I read that this band had a members of pedigree that included ESPERANZA, MUGRE, DESCARADOS and TRAGATELO…but it's even better than that makes you think it's gonna be. (Robert) (3-song cassette, lyrics included, marron.bandcamp.com)

MESS – Straight out of 1993-in-2014, Olympia's MESS create damaged lo-fi hardcore that would be a thunderous guitar/drum juggernaut were it captured in an adult studio. Guitars are off-kilter and sometimes hesitant while the drums drive the shit out of the whole recording, sometimes washing out the vocals with the brutality of cymbal oppression. Lyrics are spot the fukk on and introspective, and I'm sad that this appears to be a band that I will never see (one member in Olympia, one in Santa Rosa, and one on a sailboat to Hawaii, according to the hard scrawled bio). (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, $3ppd, Ditches Records, PO Box 913, Olympia, WA 98507)

MORE BEER PLEASE – *The War On Thirst* – Had to grab a beer to crack for this one, no? I didn't have the highest hopes for this due to the ridiculous name, but it's actually pretty cool snotty hardcore punk with some sing-alongs. Think somewhere between GRIMPLE and FINAL CONFLICT. It wasn't until the ska breakdown about five or six tracks in that I was reminded of AGAINST ALL AUTHORITY—remember them? MORE BEER PLEASE covers topics like peace, corruption, and anti-fat-shaming, but surprisingly (and thankfully) not beer and partying. These guys seem to be more interested in having a good time while making honest punk music than dialing into any of today's hot punk sub-genres, and I support it 100 percent. (Matt) (16 song CD-R, lyrics included, chodeshirley@yahoo.com)

NAPALM – *A Detestable Deed* – Malaysian reissue of some super raw and bouncy Japanese hardcore. *A Detestable Deed* was originally released in 1984, also on cassette. This seems to be a timely reissue considering some of today's hardcore trends, as it fits right in with the crop of evil sounding Japanese hardcore bands that BLAZING EYE fans are undoubtedly consuming as quickly as possible. This reissue features different art, as well as five live tracks. Sick. (Matt) (21-song cassette, lyrics not included, Black Konflik, PO Box 28, 27600 Raub, Pahang MALAYSIA)

NOGOODS – *Let's Be Friends* – Three chord punk expanded. Musically this band is pretty tight, and everything is pretty interesting. It's poppy with a roughness to it that gives it a great character. The vocals are very soothing, and the man's voice brings a lot to this band. This tape really makes one realize the importance of vocals—this would be just pretty good without this singer. Mostly nice singing, and occasionally drifting into a rage. (Mike) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, experienceshake.com)

PARASYTES – Totally awesome new shit from Montreal! Simple hypnotic punk riffs and a solid pulse keep this thing moving strong through all eight tracks, but Janick's strong and raspy vocal attack pushes this tape to the top of my listening priorities. There's a DISCHARGE foundation to this, but mostly in its direct approach, not in any "worship" sort of way. I feel confident saying that this sounds like a hybrid of MEANWHILE and Portland's SALTED CITY, but with the melodic hooks and urgency of BURNING KITCHEN. Highly recommended to all punx and I'm looking forward to the next release! (Matt) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, parasytespunk@hotmail.com, runstate-tapes.com)

PRISON LIBRARY – *Prison Life: Live Recordings 2012-2014 aka Field Recordings From The Edge Of Existence, Volume 7* – Self described Bummer Punk from Oakland, this band existed (exists?) completely off my San Francisco radar. As the title suggests, this tape is a collection of live recordings from the last couple of years…quality ranges from decent to piss poor, but it's always clear enough to hear that there are some compelling sounds coming out of this outfit. Depressive and depressing punk/no wave—blurts and shouts and drones and irreverence and I think that I like it. (Robert) (40-song cassette, no lyrics, Albacore Records, 972 Stanford Ave., Oakland, CA 94608, yacobdafisk@hotmail.com)

PUTRID CAUSE – *Super Happy Fun Time Friends* – If the band BUCKETFLUSH were potheads instead of alcoholics, you would have PUTRID CAUSE. Actually, why haven't they toured together or done a split yet? Either way, punk as hell. This is a band I could really see at Libertatia with a circle pit up front kicking up hella dust. If that is your thing, this tape is for you, but prepare for a lot of empty tape after the three or four songs on each side. Next time maybe they could order shorter tapes? (Added bonus: each tape comes with a rolling paper!) (Wreckage) (7-song cassette, lyrics not-included, hiles.29@osn.edu, putridcause.bandcamp.com)

PYKA – *Too Femme Too Furious* – Tuneless and extra brutal grind/pv from Connecticut, PYKA are sinister as fukk right out of the gate. Demo quality recording hints at the colossus that this band would be in the studio, but the power is more than present on this banger…throw in lyrics to tracks like "Inevitable" and the band's queer/trans membership flying in the face of black clad machismo? Yeah, this one rules. (Robert) (11-song cassette, lyrics included, Ashe, 2527 Lapeyrouse St., New Orleans, LA 70119, pykapvqts@gmail.com)

RATS KILL BATS – Deathrock straight outta Budapest! There are certain points in the songs where darkness takes a step back and it's more like diet deathrock, but it's still awesome. If anything, that step back is just making room for punk elements to come in and play a while. All the songs on this CD have this mysterious way of sounding really alike but really different from each other. Like "I Don't Care" comes uncomfortably close at times to sounding like early 2000's nu-metal, while "Asylum" is almost reminiscent of BIKINI KILL with an all-girl power chorus. All and all, I like it and feel like this band is due to put out more interesting stuff in the future. Oh ya, the CD comes with a sticker! (Wreckage) (4-song CD-R, lyrics not included, ratskillbats.bancamp.com)

REAGAN'S POLYP – *Deadenator* – These infamous Arkansas weirdos are getting heaps of reissue treatment lately, this one in the form of their 1997 full-length *Deadenator*. Zappa styled prog/funk weirdness, ZORN and IDIOT FLESH colliding with DEVO and LSD (the substance, not the Japanese band)…in Arkansas. I confess that this confuses me, and I do not need it in my life in any form, but I'm glad it's being inflicted on humanity. (Robert) (15-song CD-R, no lyrics, vetoxa.com)

REGIMEN – *Upprepning Är Ofrånkomlig* – This one was a winner from the first sound. You know they are going for a full on rehash of something with the guitar intro that could either go MC5 or AMDI PETERSEN…and then the rest of the band kicks in and it's *(closer to the latter than the former)* just a barrage of lo-fi garage hardcore with manic/spastic vocals straight out of Thrash2K and weird hollow sounding drums and songs that make me want to destroy *everything* around me. This tape compiles three separate demos from 2012…I am fukkn sold. (Robert) (14-song cassette, lyrics included, regimen.bandcamp.com, notnormaltapes,bandcamp.com)

SATANNABIS – *Long Live the Bong* – This starts out as I expected, blues-based "stoner rock" with lots of weed influenced lyrics and cover art. It then, seamlessly, takes a curve towards a thrashier area musically, and becomes a sort of powerviolence hardcore sound, with high and low dueling vocals. Not so much screaming baby and cookie monster, somewhere a bit more moderate. The arrangements become complicated at times, and in the way the powerviolence genre will go to a brutal hardcore breakdown, SATANNABIS will go into a guitar solo slowed-down jam. Lyrically, this release touches on topics such as the dangers of tofu overconsumption, cop hate, and unity within the scene, not unlike "walk together, rock together." Side B is earlier stuff labeled as "Bong Sesh '06" and "Space Jam '08," with a significant drop in fidelity. (Mike) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, therealsatannabis.bandcamp.com)

SH-SHAKES – This is a cassingle. *Sh-Shakes* is that echoey surf rock, garage rock that seems to be so popular nowadays. It's guitar, bass, and drums, and a man singing and yelling. The A side is labeled "lo-fi" and the B side is labeled "hi-fi" but I couldn't notice a fidelity difference. Definitely competently played, couldn't really make out the words. (Mike) (2-song cassette, lyrics not included, sh-shakes.bandcamp.com)

SLAVEDRIVER – *Marauders Of The Wasteland* – Serious ferocity from New Zealand's

SLAVEDRIVER. Fierce grind interrupted by crushing bouts of sludge/crust, with a foot firmly planted on the monitor of death metal at all times. Total crusher, this shit is ugly and excellent. (Robert) (9-song cassette, no lyrics, slavedriver666.bandcamp.com)

SLURS – The latest communique from the poppiest realms of hardcore, brought to us by former members of SEARCH & DESTROY and BORN BAD from Winnipeg. The scratchy, almost-screamy vocals bring it more into the hardcore circle of the great Venn diagram of punk. Thoughtful song arrangements and well-executed guitar feedback make this tape stand out. There's a palpable energy to the recording, which might have to with the mix—vocals are mixed in with the instruments and drums are up front. The bass adds some complicated melodies over screamy/wailing guitar solos, and the drums add a lot of nuance above and beyond bashing straight through. There is a '70s proto-punk feeling too, like what the CARBONAS were doing but with less garage rock influence. The vocals occupy the zone between screaming and singing—between holding down a melody and striking notes slightly off-key in the most human way possible. (Blotto) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, slursband@gmail.com, slurs.bandcamp.com)

SOGGY CREEP – *Worry Lines* – I would have called this college rock in my pre-grunge teens. That should not imply that this is bad, or that I do not like it, just that the lines of demarcation have shifted and blurred over the years. Driving and guitar-driven rock songs with a grunge-gone-goth vocalist that delivers the goods and then some. Fans of DRAMARAMA and SOUTHERN DEATH CULT will dig this, as will fans of early Sub Pop and people who like good ass songs. (Robert) (4-song cassette, no lyrics, soggycreep@gmail.com)

SPITTING IMAGE – *Icon Alive* – This is a rare occurrence, but I listened to this tape three times before I ever wrote any words about it, because I felt like it has to sink in more than some other releases. I'm still struggling to find the right words to describe this, but I can tell you that it's excellent. Post-punk and dark vibes combine in a way that's not quite goth, but is just fuckin' *dark*.... you know what I mean? It's like when the WIPERS recorded "Youth of America" and everyone realized "Oh, these motherfuckers are definitely *not* fucking around." The four songs on Side A are all flawless, energetic, tense, guitar driven blasts of desperation. Side B is a side-long reggae-based version of the first song on Side A, which doesn't always hit the mark, but does a better job of it than most bands would when given the chance. Great tape. (Greg) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, casinotrashrecords.bigcartel.com)

STEEL CHAINS – Often the thing that ends up disappointing me about good bands is a mediocre vocalist. I'm not just talking about lack of skill or talent—vocalists can still be great without those. There's still honesty, intensity, confidence, emotion, and vulnerability. Stefania wins me over with all of these (including the skill and talent) on here. Musically this falls in comfortably with other familiar melodic and melancholic PDX names. The recording is clean and crisp—dare I say, a little too much for me—but the songs are great and the vocals are right up front and command the majority of my attention. The opening track is pure gold. The covers are hand-stamped with thick ink, giving it that lovingly-made DIY feel. Awesome. (Matt) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, steelchains.bandcamp.com)

STENCH CONSULTANTS – *Mature Bark* – An absolute explosion of chaotic bass/drum hardcore from Ohio. Raw without eschewing quality tracks, witty without ever seeming silly, distorted as all fukk from the red-lined 4-track, and faster than just about anything in this damn mag...when they want to be. Super damn good, that's what this is. (Robert) (12-song CD-R, lyrics included, 1579 Indianola Ave., Columbus, OH 43201)

TORMENT – *Cause Living Day To Day Is* – Mid-tempo Montreal punk with rapid-fire hi-hat and a slightly garage-y production. There's not much exciting going on with the songwriting, but some hooks definitely come through and there's a nice driving quality to it. Basic but fun. (Matt) (4-song cassette, no lyrics, runstate-tapes.com)

TRANCERS – Based on the tape cover, (a smiling fiend whose face melts away revealing a skull) I had these folks pinned as a hardcore band, but beyond this specter, and deeper into the art is their true nature, some swirling psychedelic shapes! TRANCERS are from Michigan (Detroit and Kalamazoo) and mentioned that they hoped they were "punx" enough for a review in this fine publication—but to tell you the truth, they probably are not! Luckily for them, this fell into my hands. The music is probably best classified as psychedelic and/or progressive rock, and features a dizzying spectrum of instrumentation including a lot of samples, a cheese grater, various horns and synthesizers as well as the usual guitar bass and drums we are all so familiar with. There is really only ten actual "songs" on this release, out of nineteen tracks. The rest are mostly instrumental interludes of sorts with sampled voices. My favorite are from the B-side ("Cold Landscapes" II, III, IV). They also do a cover of "Mannequin" by WIRE. The tape has a lyric sheet that appears, in my copy anyway, to come separate from the rest of the tape. Well-composed music and not your average *MRR* demo. (Mike) (19-song cassette, lyrics included, trancers.bandcamp.com)

TROPHY WIFE – *All The Sides* – Deep and mellow sounds from this two-piece...except when they smother you with introspection and crush you with a subtle heaviness. Guitar is vaguely reminiscent of late '80s Dischord with splashes of discordant noise and, while the most engaging parts *(to me, anyway)* are instrumental, the vocals are haunting and demand attention. There are things in the demo box that you would never reach for intentionally...and we reviewers are sometimes quite happy that those things fall into our hands. This is one of those times. Also, the Neil Young cover is ill. (Robert) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, deadtankrecords.com)

VASTUSTA – Fucking pummeling hardcore, faithful to Finnish hardcore tradition. Razorsharp guitar, tumbling bass, shredding drum fills, and commanding screams in Finnish—fucking perfect. All the elements of classics like BASTARDS and MELLAKKA, with fresh anger and relevant for today. Best new straight-up Finnish hardcore I've heard since KIELTOLAKI. Please don't break up before doing a 7"! Insanely great! (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, mikko.santalahti@gmail.com)

WARRIOR TRIBES – This sounds old. Not like a rehashed and regurgitated interpretation of something old, but more like a lost recording from 1983 Indiana or some shit - bombastic hardcore with vague hints of more melody (listen to "Black Lung," the undeniable sub-60 second creamer of the month) and tough as shit throaty vocals, mixed all weird so half of the songs sound like they are from a different (but equally killer) recording session. Short blasts of power—heavy, to the point, and with a screaming damaged guitar. Into this. (Robert) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, warriortribes.bandcamp.com)

WILD WINGS – *World War Wild Wings* – This is mostly '70s rock or maybe garage rock. The male singer is very dramatic and tortured sounding. It is standard guitar, bass, drums and singing with the occasional synth and other effects. Liberal use of the wah-wah guitar effect, and a very fuzzed guitar sound. The vocals are very clear and up front in the mix, which is always refreshing, and the words themselves are pretty far out. (Mike) (11-song cassette, lyrics included, worldwarwildwings@gmail.com)

WOOLWORM – *Famine Walls* – Rarely does an act put me on edge as much as England's WOOLWORM. It's impossible to settle in and have a listen, because this one man outfit keeps things consistently weird on *Famine Walls*, rhythms change as often as the approach, and the only constant is damage and noise. If this is the new birth of guitar-driven noise rock then I am absolutely sold, because this shit is weird. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, communityslugs@hotmail.com)

ZEX – *Fight For Yourself* – Impossible to describe how instantly addictive this is. Every bit as good as the first time I heard CRIMINAL DAMAGE—I feel like I don't want to listen to anything else for days. Catchy, brilliant punk rock with metal leads and a BAY CITY ROLLERS flare for crafting perfect pop songs (I know you kids are wearing bullet belts, but someone needs to be honest with you). Cassette version of an LP that I need to own. (Robert) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, Jo Capitalicide, 224 Rochester, Ottawa, ON K1R 7M8 CANADA, voice-tapes.blogspot.com)

ZEX – *Ragnarock Session* – Wait a fukkn minute... .I know I am a little late to the picnic sometimes, but how the fukk did I miss this?! Ottawa's ZEX crank out the most brilliantly modern sounding UK influenced jams, and this tape captures their first two 45s plus a pair of bonus bangers from the same session. I'm not talking derivative drivel—I'm talking killer punk, infectious and tinged with just enough metal (that would be the guitar) and understated (but awesome) vocals that give the band an innocence that is difficult to describe but easy to enjoy. This rules hard. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, Jo Capitalicide, 224 Rochester, Ottawa, ON K1R 7M8 CANADA, zexzexzex.bandcamp.com)

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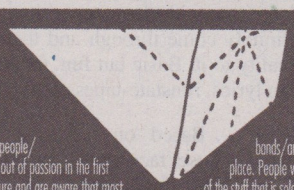

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Punk is an unwieldy object of study – because of fictions that circulate as truth, absences in archives and the questionable subject of recovery, and the passage of "minor" details into fields of knowledge. A conversation between Mimi Thi Nguyen and Golnar Nikpour about the politics of methodology, and historiography, of subculture. Now in its second printing!

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ZINES

Send zines for review to: ***MRR, PO Box 46760, San Francisco, CA 94146.*** *Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, if you take trades, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, and email address.*

Reviewers:
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(DS) Dionne Stevens
(DZ) Ryan Modee
(EC) E. Conner
(EW) Eli Wald
(GA) Grace Ambrose
(JB) Julia Booz
(JD) Justin Davisson
(JM) Jeff Mason
(KC) Kyle Canyon
(LA) Lydia Athanasopoulos
(MM) Marissa Magic
(MR) Mikey Minicomix
(OG) Oscar Gutierrez

A CATCHER'S HAND: PARLOR CITY YEARS
14 pgs
This is written by a dude looking back on his experience in the Binghamton, NY scene in the late '90s to early '00s. A reflection on his favorite band Macaulay Culprits and how he became politicized through them, an Against Me! show review, a critique of sexism in the scene at the time and lots more. Cool if you grew up around there and wanna feel nostalgic. (AP)
dewing@gmail.com

ARTCORE #33
£2.50 / 36 pgs.
If you haven't gotten your hands on *Artcore* at this point, you probably will, soon, and I say this merely because either the zine will go on for a good run, or the issues will be floating around punk circles. I always say that zines that make it past three issues are blessed. This issue of *Artcore* has some interviews with bands that I may not be too fond of (actually, I can't say that about Discharge because I actually like them and if I didn't I would probably be killed). They are in this issue, amongst a ton of other bands. There's a good review of Static Shock Weekend that had a lineup that blew me out of the water and good ol' record reviews. It's a good zine, and I'm pretty down with it. (OG)
artcorefanzine.co.uk

ASSWIPE #7
$2 or trade / 26 pgs
I feel like a total asswipe for living in the Bay and not going out very often. I have never even seen the band behind the person responsible for the zine in question, but I like 'em. *Asswipe #7* is a tour diary for the band Pink Pile. On this tour, they end up in Jamaica and don't remember how they got there. Just kidding. I don't want to blow it for you because it's more fun to read and take in the details on your own. (DS)
asswipemagazine@gmail.com / PO Box 1241, Oakland, CA 94604

BASURA #2
$3 /10 pgs
This is my second time reviewing the oh-so-aesthetically pleasing *Basura*. This is an art zine, and although I am not usually a fan of the genre, there's just something about this one that I truly appreciate, and have since the first issue. A good share of it is really fucked up art that punks often love—almost Lumpy-like. The cover shows a person sniffing poppers in a leather jacket—which one of my friends is this? (OG)
ba-su-ra.tumblr.com

DREAMS OF DONUTS #21
$2, $3 Int'l / 36 pgs
I'm in a perzine avalanche this month and damn, the Dear Diary issue isn't as awesome as this zine usually is, but it's still charming. I just didn't get into it like I usually do. This comic has rad and intricate illustrations I've come to love, but this issue is surprisingly hopeless and full of sad subject matter, or mundane. Not that a bummer fest is bad necessarily, and it is tempered with some highs, there are just more lows and a lot of heartbreak. Unrelated strings of thought that can only come from diary entries, which, no matter what anyone says, I really think are just for the person and nobody else. (JB)
all4choice@hotmail.com / Heather Wreckage, 5687 San Pablo Ave, Oakland, CA 94608

HAVE YOU HAD SEX WITH THIS PERSON #1
free / 24 pgs
I don't know if this is free but I can't see a price listed and I can't imagine paying for it. It's not offensive or stupid, except it is irritating me that one half of this split is actually the same exact zine I reviewed last month. She printed it twice! With two different splits. Do you know paper comes from trees? It's about being a spinster but mainly that means, to her, that she is married and gets to watch Netflix by herself when the husband fucks other people. And somehow that's spinstery. And then there's some tales of bad sex, awkwardness, things not working, screwing up telling someone you have a crush on them, etc. Do you celebrate the moments of failure between sexual beings? I think other fake spinsters would be into this. The other half is kind of interesting, has some choice photocopied photos of people (ostensibly not the subjects of the writing) and haikus about sex. I can see that the intimation of things gone wrong, and circumstances of brief encounters can have appeal, I'm just not really the proper audience. (JB)
catherinettezine@gmail.com

LIVE AND LET GET FLYER COMPILATION
$4 / 32 pgs
It's a collection of flyers—interesting flyers to say the least. I appreciate these types of things and I appreciate a good flyer in general. These are kind of all over the map and it's good to see that variety. Generally, this wasn't as aesthetically pleasing for me as I would want it to be, but some of you might dig it. (OG)
liveandletget@gmail.com

MANIFESTO OF THE COMMITTEE TO ABOLISH OUTER SPACE
23 pgs
The world needs more virulent manifestos. The world needs to be fucked with. The world needs to confine itself to its own fucking corner of the "universe" and deal with its shit. We reach outward when we don't want to be confronted by the darkness within. This is not just something your shitty ex or your dad does. This is something *we* as a *whole world* do. We elaborate on the purities of space which is, literally, a place full of nothing in order to distract from the mean things we do to each other and this place we call home. There is no golden future in the stars. The Committee to Abolish Space (C.A.O.S.) reminds us that these exaggerations are toxic. They seek to ground us in the unpleasant but necessary reality that aliens are not seeking to fuck our brains out or take us away from this place but that we must eliminate our focus on the stars, on the moon and deal with our failing lives on earth. (EC)
no-new-ideas-press.tumblr.com

MEND MY DRESS #13
$4ppd US or trade for perzines / 16 pgs
Fuck. I was hiking in the Marin headlands a few weeks ago. As I was tromping out to the beach to see the sun sink into the Pacific I was thinking really hard about my friends. On the way out the light was gently fading. I stopped, alone on the trail, and took a piss. When I looked up and over at a fork in the trail a bobcat was crouched and soaking up the last of the sun, and staring right at me. Obviously, the bobcat wasn't trying to fuck up my piss stream but there was something really moving and almost urgent about seeing such an elusive and powerful animal watching me pee. These brushes with enigma are important. They situate our viewpoint to be nuanced and sometimes really painful. Neely wrote a really difficult zine that reminds me a lot of this small interaction. Immediately upon finding yourself with this thing in hand you are confronted with severity. The front is simple and imageless, which is not to say unadorned. Two sentences reach out from the cover: "To those well-meaning clueless cis-dudes: this is NOT how you help survivors of sexual assault. To all of you rape apologist 'pro-sex' men: get the fuck away from me."

Contained within is the correspondence between Neely and an unnamed writer guy. The correspondence takes place after an incident where unnamed writer guy asked Neely's abusive ex to leave an event. We infer that this event was a reading at a bookstore. Unnamed writer guy kicks it off by sharing an essay he would like Neely to give him feedback on (*unpaid labor alert!*) regarding the events that took place. Neely refers to said essay as "exhibit A". It's certainly terrible and I question not only the author's intent but also his ability to get anyone to let him talk or write about almost anything. I also question what seem to be prevailing tastes for this same reason. Throughout the massacre of a think piece he conflates extreme domestic abuse with the nuances of *kink* and *communication*. Neely is righteously pissed and the rest of the zine is a good example of how to give a what for. We may wonder why Neely felt compelled to publish this correspondence. We may question why she left the author unnamed. We may even question why there wasn't a trigger or content warning. We may question all of this. The real questions however are simple: Why do these motherfuckers keep on being motherfuckers? Why do we question other women, other survivors and not question the whole fucking order of things? Why does the shit slide downhill? Why can't we live? (EC)
mendmydress.com / mendmydress@gmail.com / 221 S. 43rd, Tacoma, WA 98418

PIKAKELAUKSELLAMAAILMANLOPPUUN #7 & 2015
34 & 24 pgs
Two issues of a new Finnish zine I'd never heard of before, though I do see names I recognize from the scene there. It's all in Finnish, sans for a Paranoid interview, so I'll keep it short. The layout is really neat, stylized, Xeroxed cut'n'paste and punk-looking, with drawn details, pictures, flyers and background details, and what seems to be a themed cover. Some bands and features include a Lebakko European tour diary, a bit on the K-Town Hardcore Fest, interviews with Deathtoll 80K, Potpottavat Maalaislyylit, Lasten Hautausmaa, Tryer, Hai Jump, Lutakko, and more. Nice work by the people behind PML-zine, who also run PML Records, "that releases punk/hardcore/other records every now and then" as the note said. Kippis for the patch! Oh, and this came in a box with VHS tape stickers that had *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and *Logan's Run* on it. Rad! (LA)
pikakelauksellamaailmanloppuun@gmail.com / Bengalinpolku 1 G 26, 00560, Helsinki FINLAND

PORTLAND UNDERGROUND #1
free / 18 pgs
Newsprint art-cetera zine from the folks that run things around Portland's Black Water compound and possibly the Firebrand Collective, which has just sprung to life. In the DIY tradition of staying really busy, most contributors might be better known for their music, food/beer-making and progressive local contributions to a dark, everlasting punk scene; here, most contributors take their hand at drawing, as the theme is art. I am currently admiring the quality print job—I assume it's DIY—and I do like looking at pictures and reading some tiny type. Occasionally, we must take a break from words. Be warned, since this is a new, submission-based project, I would expect to see more varied content by number two, but they are off and running without a schedule. Excited to see more. (DS)
Wolfgang Williams, 1021 N Bryant St, Portland, OR 97217

PUNK
$10 / 32 pgs
What is and isn't punk, according to a teenaged Golnar Nikpour: "Yes: Los Crudos, riot grrrl, anarchism. No: Rape culture, ska, major labels." Decades later, I think she'd stand behind those delineations. This text, however, is not interested in defining punk, but rather, the opposite—the conversation that unfolds between Nikpour and Mimi Thi Nguyen acknowledges that it is an idea that is necessarily unstable, diffuse, and schizophrenic, a moving target. Nikpour was born in Tehran and grew up in New York City, before moving to San Francisco to coordinate the zine you are holding. Nguyen was behind zines like *Race Riot* and *Slander* and a contributor to *Maximum Rocknroll* and *Punk Planet,* among others. They're both academics now, but this isn't an academic text. It isn't a theorization of punk's role in a larger cultural landscape and it certainly isn't punk studies, a field which both have little use or respect for. As Nikpour writes, "When I write about punk, I write for other punks, always…I only care about how punk is understood insofar as I am part of punk."

The two share stories about their own initiations into the subculture, their experiences of moments of explosive possibility and the equally explosive destruction of imagined ideals. There is an emphasis throughout on the necessity of rejecting a canonized, sanitized, whitewashed, male-dominated history—punk has always been a global movement and has always had a feminist component, despite what NYHC aficionados and Riot Grrrl revisionists might tell you, and neither author will be quick to let you forget that. Letterpress printed and handbound by GUILLOTINE Press' editor Sarah McCarry, this chapbook is as beautiful as it is thought-provoking, an essential read for anyone interested in the historiography of subcultures and anyone dissatisfied with the linear stories of punk's birth in '77 and death some point thereafter (you choose the year). A coherent narrative of punk's development is, Nikpour argues, a product of violence in the archive, erasure and excision. The two turn their criticisms of punkademics onto their own research and writing practices—yes, the words hegemonic and Marxian appear here. Don't be afraid.

Nguyen and Nikpour are incisive and inspiring minds, coupled with an all-too-rare generosity of spirit and contagious enthusiasm for the subject matter, and this text will make you desperately wish to be privy to any conversation the two might have in the future, with each other or anyone else. I have returned to it time and again since its initial publication in June 2013; proceeds from this, the second printing, benefit *Maximum Rocknroll*. While assembling a magazine each month that attempts to speak to a multiplicity of punk experiences (including those that do not mirror my own), I often think about the words contained within. "Punk is a plural, rather than a coherent, series of forms or formations, that can and should resist institutionalization," forever and ever, amen. (GA)
guillotinepublishing.com

RAZORCAKE #85
$4 / 112 pgs
The highlight of this, the other regularly published American punk periodical, is undoubtedly the interview with Liz Prince—self-described pop punk snob, comic artist, and author of the recent graphic memoir *Tomboy*. I don't have any interest in getting involved in competitive pinball, but I appreciate the long-form articles that find a home in these pages, such as this month's discussion of that game, punk, and how they intersect. There are the usual reviews, comics, columns, and top fives, alongside interviews with the Real Kids, Delay, and No Small Children. It's all competent, clear, and well-executed, but parts of it feel a little too punk-as-lifestyle-brand for me, defanged and easily digestible. That said, I know—better than most!—how thankless putting together a publication like this can be, and I'm glad that *Razorcake* is still at it, and hoping to make the magazine more inclusive to

women, hence the call out up front: "If you're a woman who is knowledgeable about DIY punk, are good with deadlines, and are open to the editorial process, this is an open invitation to drop us a line about doing reviews, interviews, articles, or a webcolumn for *Razorcake*." (GA)
razorcake.org / PO Box 42129, Los Angeles, CA 90042

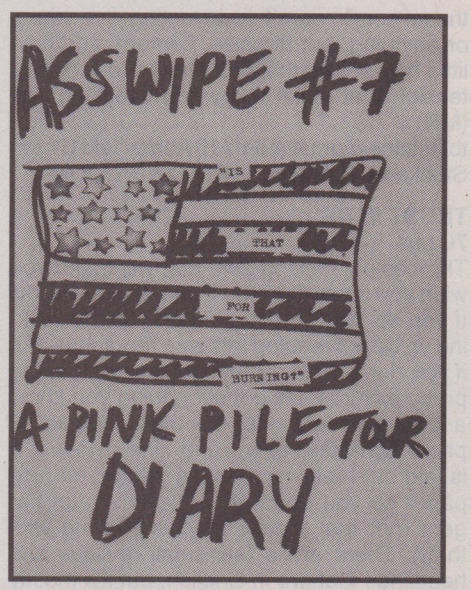
SPARE CHANGE #30
$3 / 88 pgs
This little behemoth celebrates twenty fucking years of *Spare Change*. Twenty years! Any zine that has been around that long deserves your three dollars, just so you can see what the heck it's about. Reverend Tom Foote, as I've said several times before, is one of the most stand-up individuals I've ever met in my life, a punk lifer (obviously), and a severe maniac. If you've never had the pleasure of picking up a copy, this issue is a good place to start, as it recaps some of the finer bits from over the last two goddamn decades that he has been writing stories, penning haikus, telling hilarious stories about growing up, fucking with big business, making mixtapes, supporting the USPS, putting on punk shows at Anarchtica, and singing the Weird Al versions of popular songs at karaoke. Do yourself a favor and get this. You'll thank me later. (DZ)
Reverend Tom Foote, P.O. Box 6023, Chattanooga, TN 37401

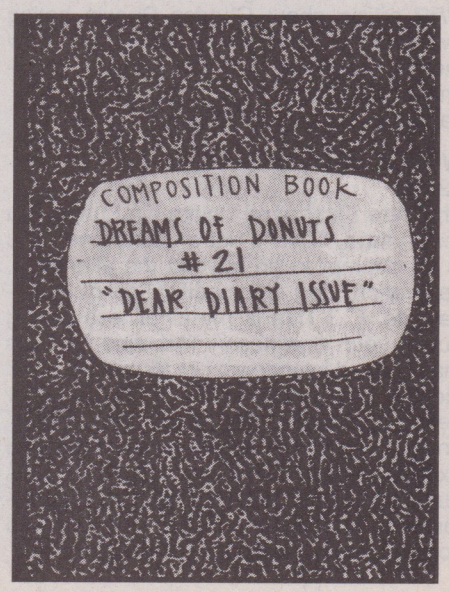
STAYING IN, Spring 2015
8 pgs
A short but thorough zine from the state I've never visited (but gone to their airports/bus stations a ton)—New Jersey. Anyway, this has a great interview with Tom Scharpling from the podcast (and former WFMU staple) "The Best Show," which goes into how he's working on the current version of the show. I kinda wanted this to be longer and touch on Tom's great rant about *Game of Thrones* (the show with elf meat). Or the Billy Joel alternate universe where he never gets big off going solo and everyone remembers him for his earlier heavy rock band, Atilla. The second part of the zine is an interview with Ian, the promoter of the Chicago fest "Ian's Party". There're some funny parts like when they ask him about other "famous Ians" that could and should play Ian's Party—i.e. Ian Mackaye, Ian Svenonious (but weirdly nothing about Ian Paice or Ian Gillian). Finally, there're some local show listings which will help those of youse in the Garden State. (JD)
stayinginzine@gmail.com / facebook.com/stayinginzine

SUBURBAN BLIGHT #11
$2, free to prisoners / 38 pgs
I can't believe this zine has been going on for over ten years. I started reading it when I was first getting into political activism and at the time it was a really amazing resource for learning about current struggles and the reasons why they were happening. In the intro, Stephanie writes, "As radicals, we must constantly struggle with and build on our radicalism, deepen our understanding of history and political structure, challenge our own assumptions, and build for the long-term in the hopes of one day truly transforming society." Personally I feel like there is an emphasis of critique of tactics more than ideology, but I feel like it's still an important read on everything from fracking to union organizing to Black Lives Matter. I also feel kinda weird reading a critique on Black organizing from a white person. This zine for me is hit or miss as someone who is a lot more experienced and read, but like I previously stated, perfect for the beginner. (AP)
callthedoctor_@hotmail.com / 30 East 29th St, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011

TEENSET #30
$1 / 34 pgs
Don't let its 4x5" size fool you, this thing is packed to the bindings with cool shit. *Teenset* has been around for a while and is composed of writings from people around the country with the main contributor based in Rochester New York. There are some movies reviews, and various rants and raves about medication commercials and the impractically of school in the internet age. There is also a write up about Tiny Tim (the ukulele guy, not the Dickens character). Fast food and wrestling reviews, and a bunch of other fun stuff I'll let you figure out. The layout is really cut'n'paste with shitty doodles lining most of the pages, but what else would you expect from a punk zine like this? (KC)
V. Carroll, 32 Edmonds St #1, Rochester, NY 14607

TOTAL BLAST No. 5
£1, $3 / 16 pgs
This is a British punk comic zine with three stories in it, and from the foreword, it seems this is the first one he's put out in awhile. It says they put out four issues ending in 1990, and this is the fifth issue, 25 years later! There are apologies for the text—he says he used a word processor and cut and paste the speech balloons. I think he literally meant "cut and paste," like he printed them out and used glue and scissors, because there's definitely not a heavy hand with digital on this. The characters faces aren't that expressive, but some feeling gets across. There isn't that much cartoony movement either, but the characters are drawn in different positions, so it's not all just talking heads (AKA "The *Doonesbury* Syndrome" aka "Minicomic-itis"). The typed text doesn't kill the feel of the art, and the dialogue and storylines are somewhat amusing. This artist clearly has the chops to do something with their cartooning if they keep at it. The stories themselves deal with situations both real and fantastical that aging punks might encounter, which is either funny, depressing, or both. It's also interesting to see what sort of comix, thoughts and ideas someone out there in the UK is having/drawing, which is why I like trading comix/zines in the mail with people outside the US. In any case,





these comix aren't re-inventing the wheel or anything, but the size, content, and how little he's selling them for show a lack of pretension that make this worth checking out. (MR)
tblastzine@gmail.com / 10 Abbeyfield Close, Stockport ST3 8EH UNITED KINGDOM

TRUST #170
70 pgs
The coolest looking zine that will make you wish you knew German if you didn't already. If you do know German, then you are fucking up by not reading this zine regularly—but if you don't it's okay, just get it to look at the pretty pictures. It's got everything you know and love in fanzines: columns, interviews, photo spreads, record and zine reviews. It is laid out really nice and is printed on nice paper so you don't get inky Maximum fingers (not that there's anything wrong with that!). There are a few small reviews and headlines that are in English, but it's mostly German, including interviews with/about: Marc Gärtner, Twisted Chords, New Direction Fest, Wolfenstein, and Tiger Pussy. If you really are desperate you could get the google machine to translate for you but "it not working best always." (KC)
trust-zine.de / Postfach 11 07 62 28087 Bremen GERMANY

WHERE ARE YOU GOING? AN INTERACTIVE ZINE FOR EXPLORERS #1
free / 36 pgs
Apparently this is a guidebook for people moving to a new place and trying to make friends. A move from California to Memphis, and the expectations of the South, and then reactions to the South. There's a worksheet for observations (not judgments) of things you see around you, thought provoking, different, and unexpected when you look at your new place. Then it goes into the parallel worlds theory. And some ideas about how to get to know your new town (go to the library!) And then, she references a poem but instead of reprinting it, she says to Google it and she'll wait. Are you kidding me?? The best thing in here is a reprinted *NPR* article about Charles Darwin hating everything and everybody and being a slow mental processor. And the phrase "friendship poverty." (JB)
catherinettezine@gmail.com

WORDS UPON WORDS #1
12 pgs
The intro ("last page I write, first page you read") says, "This is not a music zine. This is an attempt to go beyond the alienation, separation, and commodification of everyday life. […] This is my loneliness calling out to your loneliness." This zine features mainly band interviews, but also a few other pieces, pulled from other zines or never before published; thoughts, commentary, analysis. At points it gets rather deep and expressive, and I can tell the writer likes punk, but he also likes to write. I like that. Interesting questions, cut'n'paste layout with collage details, printed in Landscape mode, Xeroxed and stuck together with silver duct tape. DIY and made with care, it's endearing and a good read. Includes interviews with Massachusetts' Foreign Objects (albeit from 2012), 1981 (the Finish anarcho band), and Baton Rouge from Lyon, and short Q&As, transcribed excerpts from a podcast, with Tubers and Gabriel Kuhn (author of *Sober Living for the Revolution: Hardcore Punk, Straightedge, and Radical Politics).* Interested to see what's in the next issue. (LA)
anarkiogkos.tumblr.com

WORDS UPON WORDS #2
34 pgs
Very nice landscape formatted punk zine outta Oslo. I haven't seen any actual "in my hands" zines *fra Norge* (err, from Norway) before. Well, this one is a *real treat*. This covers a few things that you'll wanna get clued in on if you haven't already. Namely: the interview with super-rad Osloian band, Dark Times which covers a lot of issues such as "girl hate" among girls, Pussy Riot, and an Oslo Queer Festival which I had no idea existed but is really cool. The interview also goes into breakdowns of their song lyrics and their deeper meanings. Next up is Macedonia's Bernays Propaganda who have members of FxPxOx. I had a good laugh at the question and vocalist Vasko's reply regarding if she's 30% communist (and her answer was really interesting, too). The live photos of the band look really great—especially on this smooth and shiny style paper. There's also a short chat with Camille from London punks/indie rawkers, Throwing Up. Holy shit, I just now listening to them and damn they're good! Plus, there's a fascinating interview with former Weatherman, Mark Rudd who's also featured in the excellent documentary "The Weather Underground".This discussion involves lot of details re: the cult-like nature of the W.U., monogamy within radical organizations, Occupy, and making connections with the punk scene. *MRR* faves Good Throb discuss how they got into punk (yeah, some jaded fucks might think this is a clichéd question but I *always* find it fascinating as no one really has the same exact entryway) and putting on all-ages shows. Norwegian-American author John Erik Riley's interview is short but also a neat take on being the differences between the two cultures and how punk/HC influenced him. Additionally, there's a long piece about punks' experiences in dealing with the cops called "Police Beat." I love the intro where Erika says: "Cops in Norway don't even carry guns. But we're 'still not loving police'". My only complaint is that the font in this section was too tiny for my old eyes. Lastly, Erika writes a short entry about talking about HC/punk and gender to Motmakt (Counterpower the Oslo Anarcho organization). I'm really looking forward to Erika's future efforts as she's off to a great start. So *sjekk det ut det er utmerket*! (Check it out it's excellent!) (JD)
post@moderlove.no

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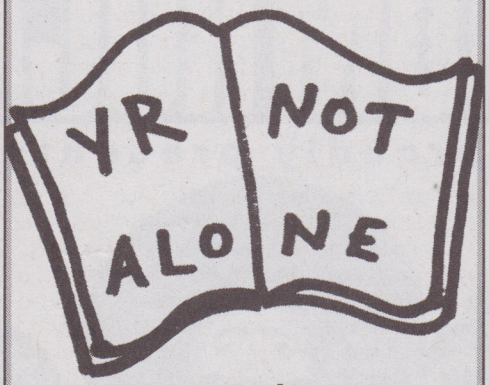

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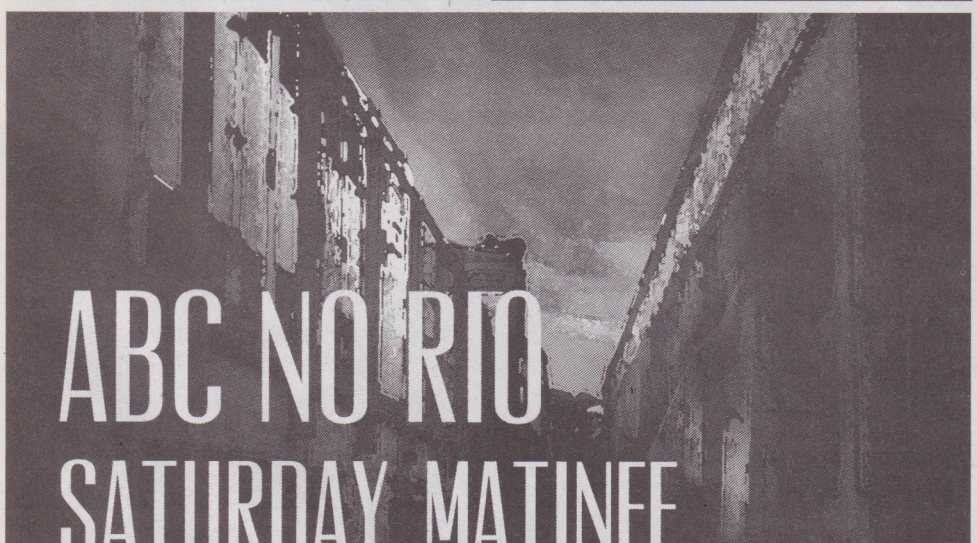

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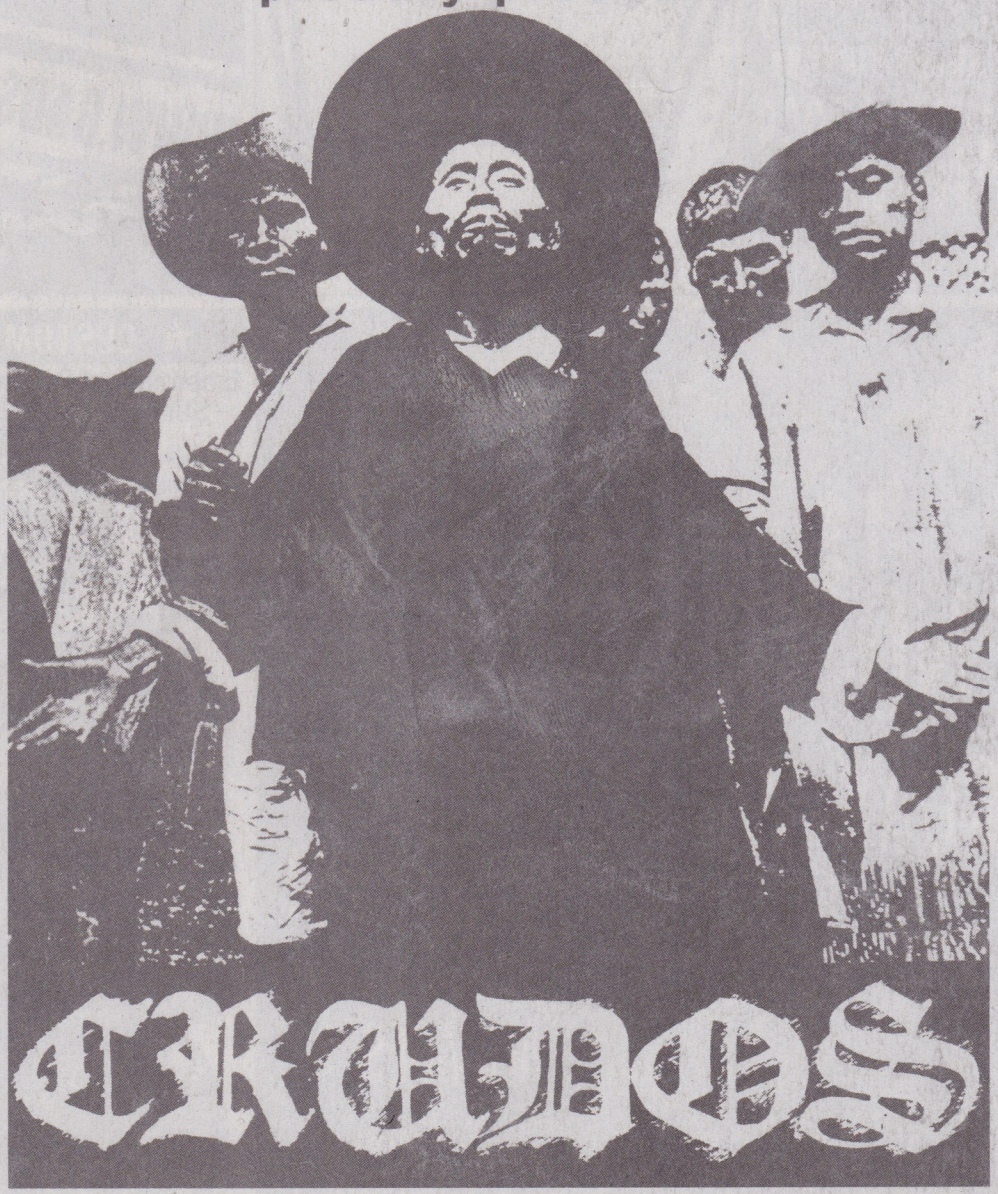

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